



Interpreting the Second Amendment

5.&W. 357 MAGNUM

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THE AMERICAN PORT OF THE AMERI

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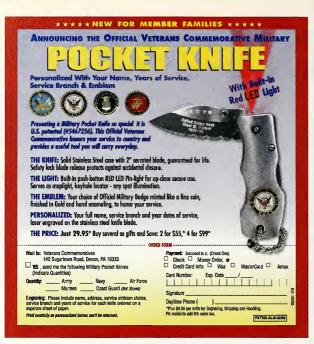
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COVER: At the center of the gun-control debate is the Second Amendment. Many gun owners insist that owning a firearm is the birthright of every law-abiding American citizen; opponents say that argument is based on a faulty understanding of the Constitution. *Corbis*



The American Legion Magazine, a leader among national general-interest publications, is published monthly by The American Legion for its 2.7 million members. These wartime veterans, working through 15,000 community-level posts, dedicate themselves to God and Country and traditional American values; strong national security; adequate and compassionate care for veterans, their widows and orphans; community service; and the wholesome development of our nation's youth.



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All about money

Thanks for publishing L. Brent Bozell III's article "A Poisoned Culture" (December). It is an excellent presentation about television executives' decision to fur-

ther pollute our homes with rotten shows. Networks are

making decisions about our values, and they are totally wrong. They're concerned with only one thing – money collected from advertisers and sponsors interested in selling products through these degrading programs.

Bozell and his supporters continue to fight for common decency in entertainment, and this article shows his concern.

– Don Mulligan, High Point, N.C.

Wake up, parents

L. Brent Bozell III's determination to rule the airwaves with his Marxist way of thinking is a tossup between sad and entertaining. As a teen, I enjoyed watching the World Wrestling Federation – the man's soap opera, if you will. My father was always right there, reminding me that while it was fun to watch, the things the wrestlers did really hurt and that they were actors.

As much as we'd love to blame television for the country's moral problems, we have no one to blame but each other. Instead of enjoying TV with their children, parents sit them in front of the TV and expect it to be their parent.

As for me, I've grown up but still enjoy watching wrestling from time to time. I'm a non-commissioned Army officer in my fifth year of service, and somehow I've managed to avoid hitting my commander in the head with a steel chair or running him over with a motorcycle. Wonder why? Oh yeah – thanks, Dad, for being a real parent.

- Cpl. Jeremy J. Bagley, Fort Bliss, Texas

Blame V-chip law

While I agree with author L. Brent Bozell III that too much explicit sex and graphic violence is on TV these days, in searching for people to blame he forgot to look in the mirror.

Not satisfied with the voluntary program ratings effort of the broad-cast industry, the Parents Television Council successfully lobbied Congress to pass the V-chip law, requiring most new TV sets to include a coding system that allows parents to block out programs with content they deem offensive.

The object was "to empower parents." But what the law really did was free programmers from the need to exercise moral restraint and shift total responsibility for restricting sex and violence to parents. Bozell would do better spending more time educating parents on how to control what their children watch and less on chasing electronic censorship rainbows.

- Robert E. Gerson, Tarrytown, N.Y.

TV not free speech

In response to Marc D. Allan's article "Is Television Really to Blame?" (December), the answer is a resounding "yes." When the founding fathers wrote the First Amendment of the Constitution, they did not mean that a person or people could say anything they want. They intended free speech to be a right to protect freedom from tyranny, not as a way to tear down religious beliefs or culture itself. The founding fathers were with few exceptions religious men,

WE WANT YOUR OPINIONS

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You can also contact us via e-mail directly or through the World Wide Web:

e-mail: magazine@legion.org Internet: http://www.legion.org and none of them would have condoned an interpretation of the First Amendment to include crude and insulting language or actions. — Geraldine M. Wagner, Lompoc, Calif.

Misplaced trust

I want to thank Stephen Presser for his article "Back to the Ba-



sics of the Constitution" (December). Somewhere along the line we mistakenly put our trust in the Supreme Court to pro-

tect our constitutional rights, only to find it betrayed us by taking some of them away. The branches of our government are totally unresponsive and unwilling to abide by their oath to protect the Constitution and challenge the Supreme

Court gods ruling.

The Constitution gives the Supreme Court no legislative powers. In its landmark ruling separating church and state, the Supreme Court ruled neither on the letter nor the intent of the First Amendment. So did it interpret or unconstitutionally amend the Constitution by legislating from the bench? If Congress cannot pass a constitutional law prohibiting prayer or the posting of the Ten Commandments in schools, then how can the Supreme Court's ruling prohibiting the same things be constitutional?

Because of our complacency, we allowed the Supreme Court to put another nail in our freedom coffin. I just hope we can do a better job protecting our Second Amendment rights, or someday we'll all be in trouble.

- Tom Apple, West Lafayette, Ohio

Praise for court

I'm sure Stephen Presser is a learned scholar and a decent man, but his criticism of the U.S. Supreme Court's "judicial activism" against "states' rights" ignores some historical realities.

Growing up in southern Georgia during the Jim Crow days of the 1950s and '60s, I know first-hand the dark side of "states'

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When Henry Ford finally decided to discontinue the Model T in 1927, there was much speculation about the wisdom of this move. Ford's concern turned to joy when over 25 million Americans flocked to Ford showrooms in the first week, just to get a glimpse of the new Model A.

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rights." Throughout the South, black school buildings, equipment and libraries were consistently – and intentionally – kept inferior to those for whites, despite the states' assertion of "separate but equal."

With regard to religion in the schools, it might not be a surprise to Presser that white ministers routinely had access to black schools and used that access to preach the godliness of white supremacy and racial segregation to us during assembly. Having lived through this, I say thank God that segregated schools and school-sponsored religion were overturned by that "activist" Supreme Court.

Without the Supreme Court taking activist positions with school segregation, prayer in schools and Miranda, blacks - at least in the southern United States - would still be segregated, tyrannized and disenfranchised citizens all in the name of God. During the 1950s. the states of the old Confederacy enshrined the subjugation of all black citizens - veterans notwithstanding - within their state constitutions and statutes. When you observe that 50 years later certain state legislatures refuse to repeal some of these heinous laws, it's safe to assume nothing would have changed without the court's intervention.

- Al Ball, Somerset, N.J.

Banners back

Rekindling the Blue Star Service Banner program is an excel-



lent idea. For years I've searched for one of the World War II variety to show to my grandsons. I've also thought it would be nice to have a banner of similar sort for yeterans to dis-

play, one that would permit our neighbors to learn about those of us who have served.

- J. Richard Corbett, Wilmington, N.C.

Respect flag

It was refreshing to see the article about flag etiquette in the December issue ("Wave It Proud,

But Wave It Right"). Since Sept. 11, I've witnessed several well-intentioned and patriotic Americans trying to do their best to display the national ensign. I even saw a few U.S. Marines on the news folding the ensign on the deck and signing it to be flown elsewhere abroad. People should be aware that it is unacceptable to write on or allow the ensign to touch the deck.

- Michael K. O'Connell, Ridgecrest, Calif.

Sacred liberties

Like most Americans, I'm more than prepared to live with the inconveniences that will accompany the implementation of reasonable and prudent measures designed to make terrorists' jobs more difficult. But I am not willing to grant for even one minute that the attacks of Sept. Il justify scrapping traditional American liberties and constitutional safeguards.

In the aftermath of the attacks, many were quick to suggest that life as we've known it in this country will be forever changed and that we must be prepared as a people to sacrifice our privacy and a measure of our civil liberties in the quest for greater security. Former Labor Secretary Robert Reich has already suggested that we can expect to be asked to carry national ID cards complete with microchips that will allow lawenforcement officers to stop us and scan our bios and credit histories at the drop of a hat.

Others, including Attorney General John Ashcroft, are saying that the government needs greater surveillance and wiretap authority as well as the virtually unfettered right to look at our e-mail.

We must be careful lest a few Muslim extremists manage to do what neither Hitler nor Stalin could accomplish by convincing us that we must sacrifice our liberty, privacy and freedom of movement for more security. Suspected terrorists should be targeted for surveillance and the rest, but we ought not run roughshod over the rights of Americans.

Sen. Phil Gramm, R-Texas, said it best when he told his colleagues, "I'm not interested in changing the way I live. I'm interested in changing the way they live."

- Charles E. Cooper, Blythe, Calif.



Profit and pain

I found the December article on NAFTA ("Profit or Pain?") refreshing. It tells both sides. Free trade is key to a well-functioning nation, internally and internationally. The shutdown of apparel factories in New England or the obsolescence of farms in southern Mexico are definitely painful to those affected. However, the positive effect on both economies at large is substantial. Bottling up trade at the borders only encourages inefficiencies of certain industries, which benefits no one in the long run.

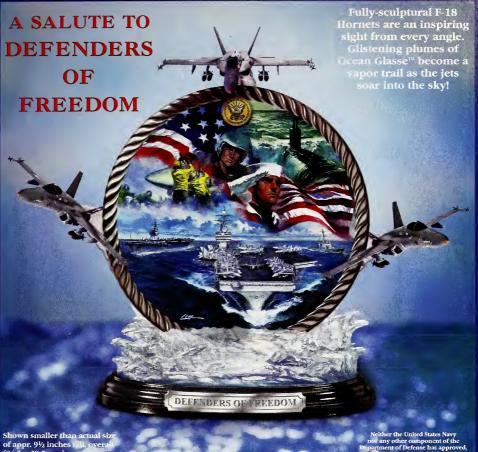
- John Schlaack, Imlay City, Mich.

Missing facts

Ben Barber's article left out a lot of facts. NAFTA allows American-based manufacturers to relocate to Mexico and in effect produce their products by paying slave-labor wages. And Barber fails to mention that the parts and supplies shipped from the United States to Mexico are counted as exports. When used in the assembly of products and shipped back to the United States, though, they aren't counted as imports.

The politicians of both countries seem to have no clue how to solve a problem that has a simple solution: require all the businesses that have relocated to Mexico to pay at least what is set as a minimum wage in America. Even at that meager wage, hundreds of thousands of jobs would be created in Mexico, and every company that has relocated would make billions in profits.

- Charles H. Fyffe, Yorktown, Ind.



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Miracles made possible



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"In caring for children, we are protecting the fabric and future of America."



A s veterans, we understand what it means to have a fighting spirit. Common goals and shared values placed us side by side on battlefields, fighting bravely to preserve peace, defend freedom and protect families back home. But our obligation to protect and defend did not cease when we left the service. As veterans and Legionnaires, we still fight battles as we continue to build America from within. One essential strategy of the battle plan is to aid, educate and protect our nation's greatest asset: children. In caring for them, we are protecting the fabric and future of America.

The American Legion family's affiliation with the Children's Miracle Network resulted from a Legion resolution more than four years ago. The partnership grew out of shared values – a passion to promote the physical, spiritual and emotional health and well-being of our nation's children. By serving children in communities across America, CMN offers the Legion a unique opportunity to build patriotism and family values while providing funds to 170 children's hospitals nationwide, making miracles happen every day.

Let me tell you about one such miracle that directly resulted from this partner-ship. A few years ago, a baby girl born with a congenital heart condition required immediate open-heart surgery. Her family, unable to afford adequate medical help, sought the services of a local CMN children's hospital. The infant was immediately admitted for surgery, no questions asked.

Despite the difficulties besetting this young family, blessings had already been set in motion. Just two days before the child was born, the hospital received a critical and expensive piece of equipment necessary for infant open-heart surgery. The purchase was made possible through a donation by several CMN sponsors, and most notably, American Legion members in that community. Miraculously, the baby's heart grew stronger with each passing week, thanks in part to Legion volunteers who gave their time to raise money for the essential lifesaving

The American Legion and CMN are currently participating in an especially unique joint venture. A four-year program, culminating with the National World War II Memorial dedication in May 2004, is helping raise funds and awareness for CMN-affiliated children's hospitals.

The elements of this initiative are rooted in two major programs: media events and fund-raising events. Media events, which include two-hour national television specials, are designed to increase public awareness of the sacrifices made by the nation's military and to draw attention to the legacy given us by World War II veterans. Fund-raising initiatives benefit Legion programs and CMN hospitals alike.

I hope you are asking by this time how your post can become involved. Although opportunities abound, two primary projects are in the forefront: The American Legion family's National Walkathon and the National Flag Icon Program.

The National Walkathon is a fund-raiser that promotes the World War II Memorial dedication at the grass-roots level. The walkathon, conducted during the same time frame as the national TV broadcasts, will be coordinated to end one day prior to the dedication services in Washington. Your post can get on the bandwagon to promote this important event.

The Flag Icon Program directly benefits Legion programs and local CMN hospitals. Dollar donations "purchase" uniquely designed American-flag icons. The icons, printed with donors' names are displayed at local posts throughout the campaign. Custom-designed kits containing promotional materials, including 200 flag icons, are provided to posts and departments to jump-start the program.

Information can be obtained through The American Legion's Americanism, Children and Youth Division and on the Web at www.legion.org.

The CMN partnership offers an added, but indirect, benefit as well – a heightened public perception of the Legion through our increased presence in communities. This opportunity helps boost recruitment efforts.

I urge every Legionnaire to become involved in making this joint venture a success. Together, The American Legion and Children's Miracle Network are a formidable army.

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Federal funding for Amtrak

SUPPORT

Sen. John F. Kerry D-Mass.



President Eisenhower once challenged Americans to build a national highway system because it was a critical ingredient of national security. A modern highway system from coast to coast meant that Americans could move everything from food to munitions swiftly and efficiently in response to a crisis.

Today America would again benefit from a different transportation challenge: building a secure and national rail system, ensuring that America, especially after Sept. 11, has a diverse transportation infrastruc-"The Amtrak of ture that can never be

the next 30 years must be a faster, more competitive transportation

The Amtrak of the next 30 years must be a

faster, more competitive transportation option for the American traveler and in the wake of the option." terrorist attacks, it's even more clear that rail trans-

portation needs to be a key element of our nation's transportation infrastructure. Amtrak's ridership climbed 10 percent after Sept. 11, with the most significant growth in long-distance service.

We need to continue to invest in the safety and security of Amtrak, even as we push innovations to

spur increased train travel nationwide.

Historically, Amtrak has received sporadic and insufficient financial support from the federal government. In spite of that challenge, high-speed rail has proven to be a financial success in the Northeast, and it is projected to add \$180 million annually to Amtrak's bottom line when all 20 Acela Express train sets are in operation.

Making our rail system safe will come with a high pricetag, but it's trivial compared to the devastation that could be wrought by a single terrorist attack on passenger rail. More than 300,000 people pass through century-old rail tunnels under New York City each day, tunnels lacking both ventilation and sufficient emergency exits.

It is time to shore up the security of our transportation infrastructure before it is targeted.

Our overburdened highways and skyways and our long-term national-security needs require it, and the traveling public should demand nothing less.

Rep. John L. Mica

OPPOSE

In 1997, Congress passed a law requiring Amtrak to become self-financing by 2002. In 2000, Amtrak lost more than \$900 million; during the first six months of 2001, Amtrak lost \$405 million. Recently, Amtrak mortgaged Penn Station in New York City for \$300 million just to meet its operational costs as



its revenues faltered. After receiving billions of federal dollars in capital and operational subsidies, Amtrak now teeters on the brink of bankruptcy.

In Amtrak's Northeast Corridor - Washington-New York City-Boston -Congress poured in more than \$7 billion for a new high-speed rail service, including train equipment. Unfortunately the Acela project is behind schedule, new equipment will not function at high speed and ridership on the New York-Boston route has actually

"Amtrak backers want Congress to ignore the law and pour more funds into the losing venture."

dropped.

Now Amtrak backers want Congress to ignore the law it passed and instead pour more funds into the losing venture. The Amtrak Reform Council recently voted to liquidate Amtrak after seeing nothing but red ink in its future. The GAO recently testified before Congress that it will actually require \$20 billion for the necessary infrastructure improvements to make just the Northeast Corridor a true high-speed rail line.

Amtrak also has been dangling other undesignated high-speed rail corridors as a carrot on a stick to bait a dozen communities starved for mass-transit service. Why would Congress grant exclusive development and operational rights to a defunct operator? With operational deficits continuing to grow, how could Congress ignore the self-sufficiency law it enacted four years ago?

It is time to honor the law and the reform council's official determination that Amtrak will

be unable to meet the required goal of operational self-sufficiency by the end of next year. Why not liquidate this losing and outdated system, turn potentially successful corridors over to private industry and stop underwriting government failure?

YOUR OPINIONS COUNT

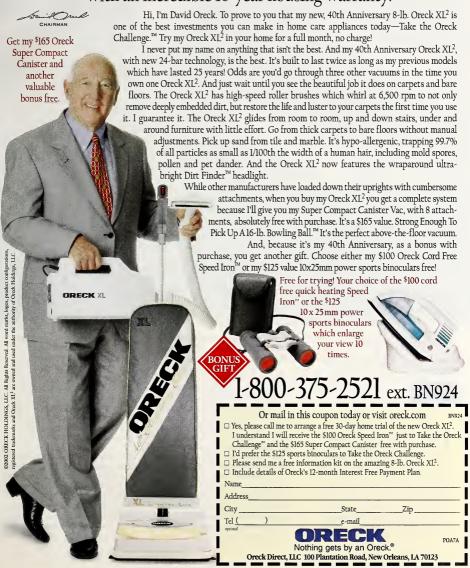
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> – Second Amendment, Constitution of the United States of America

Second Amendment:

Anti-gun laws aren't responsible for drops in crime.

BY CHARLTON HESTON

I sn't it ironic that the gun debate continues, even after "gun control" has been so thoroughly discredited and gun ownership vindicated as a benefit to life and liberty?

History proves it. Over the past decade – while the U.S. "population" of firearms has increased by approximately 50 million guns, and while the number of states allowing licensed, law-abiding

citizens to carry firearms has more than doubled to 33 states – armed crime, violent crime and firearm accidents have all dropped dramatically.

Anti-gun laws didn't do that. All anti-gun laws do is diminish the right of lawful, peaceful citizens to defend themselves, and they draw attention away from the real menace to public safety: inadequate enforcement of existing laws.

The anti-gun movement is built on several dangerous fallacies: that sacrificing freedom can lead to greater security; that criminals will obey anti-gun laws more than they obey laws against murder, rape and robbery; and that firearms are used more for harm than for good.

Let's dispel those falsehoods with the truth. Framers of the U.S. Constitution intended the right to keep and bear arms to be an individual right of all lawful citizens for very important reasons. U.S. courts have upheld that view. And that's a good thing for you and me, because firearms are used far more often to prevent crimes than to commit them.

The Citizen Militia. The Second Amendment to the U.S. Constitution reads, "A well regulated Militiatia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed." But the word "militia" doesn't refer to the National Guard — see Heston, page 14



A Closer Look

Vast majority of Americans support sensible gun laws.

BY SARAH BRADY

ike many Americans, I didn't give much thought to the Second Amendment of the U.S. Constitution until my family was profoundly affected by an act of gun violence. I'm speaking, of course, about the 1981 shooting of my husband, Jim, when he was serving as President Reagan's press secretary. The disturbed man who shot and seriously wounded Jim, along with Presi-

dent Reagan and two law-enforcement officers, should never have been able to buy a gun. He lied on the federal firearms purchase form. However, since there was no mandatory background check system for gun purchasers at the time, the lie was not detected.

That's one of the reasons I began to work for sensible gun laws. In the mid-1980s, Jim and I started campaigning for a piece of legislation that would eventually bear his name: the Brady Law. The law requires background checks on gun purchases from licensed dealers, so prohibited purchasers like the man who shot Jim could not buy a gun over the counter. But like other common-sense gun measures Jim and I continue to work for. it

does not prevent law-abiding citizens from buying guns.

Poll after poll shows the vast majority of Americans support sensible gun laws. For instance, in a national poll released recently by the Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence, 83 percent of respondents supported requiring criminal background checks on all gun purchases at gun shows. Support also remains for each of the sensible proposals on our legislative agenda, such as limiting individuals to one handgun purchase a month - to prevent trafficking - and requiring all guns be sold with childproof safety locks.

Yet over the years, I have heard countless times from opponents that almost >> see Brady, page 16

[Heston] or any other governmentorganized or regulated body, as the anti-gun lobby claims.

Under Congress' Militia Act of 1792, arms ownership wasn't just a right; it was the duty of nearly every free adult male. And the same basic law stands today. Under U.S. Code (Title 10, Section 311), the "militia" is made up of two complementary bodies: the "organized militia," which is the National Guard; and the "unorganized militia," which is every male citizen between ages 17 and 45.

As Virginia's George Mason, widely considered to be the father of the Bill of Rights in the U.S. Constitution, said, "I ask, sir, what is the militia? It is the whole people."

When our Constitution was written, the right to arms was so firmly grounded as a natural right in English Common Law that it went without saying. It was simply assumed. In fact, in debates over the new Constitution, James Madison argued that the Second Amendment and the Bill of Rights were unnecessary, since it was inconceivable that anyone would ever question that all free men enjoyed those freedoms as a natural birthright, a gift from the Creator.

Fortunately George Mason, Patrick Henry and others had the vision and caution to insist the new Constitution incorporate a written bill of rights. Imagine where we'd be today if they'd had the naiveté to assume those rights would never be attacked.

Courts Confirm Right to Arms. American courts have repeatedly affirmed that the right to keep and bear arms is an individual right. Although the U.S. Supreme Court has ruled directly on the Second Amendment in only a few cases, its views are clear.

In 1939, the U.S. Supreme Court said, "the debates in the Convention, the history and legislation of the colonies and states, and the writings of approved commentators ... show plainly enough that the militia comprised all males physically capable of acting in con-

"All anti-gun laws do is diminish the right of lawful, peaceful citizens to defend themselves, and they draw attention away from the real menace to public safety: inadequate enforcement of existing laws."

cert for the common defense."

In 1886, the court ruled, "the states cannot, even laving the constitutional provision in question out of view, prohibit the people from keeping and bearing arms."

Even in one of the most shameful cases in American history, the 1857 Dred Scott decision, the U.S. Supreme Court argued that states adopting the Constitution could not have meant to consider freed black slaves as "citizens," because "it would give them the full liberty of speech ... and to keep and carry arms wherever they went."

Trust Science, Not Fiction. But forget what the framers of the Constitution believed. Forget what the courts have said. Instead, let's look beyond the rhetoric to the reality of firearms in America today.

According to the National Center for Health Statistics, firearms account for only 1 percent of all fatalities, ranking far behind many other causes of death, including tobacco use (19 percent); lack of exercise or proper diet (14 percent); alcohol abuse (5 percent); and infectious diseases (4 percent).

Since 1930, while the U.S. population has more than doubled and the number of guns has quintupled, the annual number of accidental firearm fatalities has decreased 73 percent to the lowest rates ever recorded. The accidental firearm fatality rate has declined 91 percent since the alltime high in 1904, and in just one decade, from 1989 to 1998, it has fallen by 50 percent. Among children, such deaths have decreased 78 percent since 1975.

Firearms Save Lives. Florida State University's awardwinning criminologist Gary Kleck - no fan of the NRA calculated that Americans use privately owned firearms to thwart criminal attack between 2 million and 2.5 million times each year, and in the vast majority of cases, no shot is ever fired. As noted in the March 1994 Journal of the Medical Association of Georgia, that's

as many as 75 lives protected by a gun for every life lost to a gun.

Acknowledging that fact, over the past several years, many states have passed laws allowing licensed, law-abiding citizens to carry firearms for self-defense. Right-to-carry permit holders have turned out to be among the most law-abiding members of their communities.

In Florida, out of the 736,355 permits issued between 1987 and 2001, only 130 - two one-hundredths of 1 percent - have been revoked because a permit-holder committed a crime in which a firearm was present. In Oklahoma, five one-hundredths of 1 percent of all permits issued have been revoked for any reason. In North Carolina and South Carolina, just four-tenths of 1 percent of the permits issued have been revoked for any reason.

To look at right-to-carry laws on a national scale, University of Chicago researchers John Lott and David Mustard examined FBI crime statistics for every American county from 1994 to 1997. Their findings:

States with the largest increases in gun ownership also had the largest declines in violent crime.

High-crime urban communities have the greatest reductions in violent crime when law-abiding citizens are allowed to carry concealed handguns.

If states without concealed firearms laws had adopted them in 1992, approximately 1,500 murders, 4,000 rapes, 12,000 robberies and 60,000 aggravated assaults could have been prevented each year. ⇒ see Heston, page 16



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THE LEGION'S POSITION

Resolution No. 335:Support for the Second Amendment

RESOLVED, by The American Legion in National Convention assembled in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, September 5, 6, 7, 2000, that The American Legion reaffirms its recognition that the Second Amendment to the Constitution of the United States guarantees each lawabiding American citizen the right to keep and bear arms; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, that the membership of The American Legion urges our nation's lawmakers to recognize, as part of their oaths of office, that the Second Amendment guarantees law-abiding citizens the right to keep and bear the arms of their choice, as do the millions of American veterans who have fought, and continue to fight, to preserve those rights, hereby advise the Congress of the United States and the Executive Department to cease and desist any and all efforts to restrict these rights by any legislation or order.

[Heston] Typically, less than 1 percent of the residents of any state apply for a permit to carry a firearm. So why do right-to-carry laws have such a marked effect on crime? Because criminals don't know who's armed and who isn't. The mere fact that a potential victim might be armed forces criminals to think twice and makes citizens safer whether or not they choose to carry a firearm.

Freedom's Faithful. Could it be that the NRA's rapid growth to an all-time record size of 4.3 million members, its selection by Fortune magazine as the No. 1 most effective ad-

vocacy group in America, the public-opinion polls that pick me as America's third-best-known celebrity spokesperson, the ongoing decline of the anti-gun lobby, the triumph of gun owners in the 2000 elections and today's exploding public passion to protect freedom above and before everything else are all parts of the same story?

It's the story of freedom. And our first freedom – the one right that safe guards all others and allows liberty to exist at all – is the Second Amendment right to keep and bear arms.

Charlton Heston is president of the National Rifle Association.

[Brady] every gun-control proposal was an infringement of Second Amendment rights. I have learned much about the Second Amendment – and how those who oppose reasonable gun laws distort it.

The Second Amendment reads, "A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed." The meaning of these 27 words has been settled for decades in the courts: the Second Amendment protects only the right to keep and bear arms in the context of a well-regulated militia. Unfortunately, the gun lobby - and now the Bush administration - claims that the amendment refers to an individual right to arms and, as a result, gun-safety regulations are unconstitutional. This reading of the Second Amendment is at odds with its language, its history and its interpretation by the courts.

The Original Intent. In our nation's early days, each state had its own militia, an organized military force of ordinary citizens serving as parttime soldiers. The militia was not, as the gun lobby claims, simply another word for armed individuals. Militia membership was limited to able-bodied white males between the ages of 18 and 45, and members were subject to legal requirements, such as reporting for training several days a year and engaging in military exercises away from home.

When the founding fathers met

at the Constitutional Convention in 1787, one major debate was over the extent of the federal government's control of military power. The new Constitution established a permanent federal army of professional soldiers. However, the "Anti-Federalists" – with memories of King George III's troops still fresh in their minds – distrusted the standing army of professional soldiers. They saw effective state militias as a way to prevent federal monopoly of military power.

The Second Amendment was written in response to this Anti-Federalist concern. The intent was to prevent the federal government from passing laws that would disarm the state militia. Today the modern "well-regulated Militia" is the National Guard, a state-organized force of ordinary citizens serving as part-time soldiers under the command of each state's governor.

When the founders wanted to enumerate broad rights, as they did with the First Amendment, they knew how to do it and they did it very well. If the founders wanted to enshrine a broad individual right to keep and bear arms in the Second Amendment, why include language about the "militia" and the "security of a free state"?

The Gun Lobby's Campaign of Misinformation. The gun lobby, led by the National Rifle Association, persists in promoting the idea that the Second Amendment protects gun ownership by in
→ See Brady, page 18

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[Brady] dividuals. In fact, the NRA routinely omits the first 13 words when citing the Second Amendment, quoting only that part of the amendment that starts with "the right to keep and bear arms." Ignoring the historical and legal context, it even goes so far as to inscribe its truncated version on the walls of its corporate headquarters. In 1991, former U.S. Supreme Court

Chief Justice Warren Burger called the gun lobby's deception "one of the greatest pieces of fraud, I repeat the word 'fraud,' on the American public by special-interest groups that I have ever seen in

my lifetime."

The NRA also claims that the Second Amendment guarantees the individual right to own a gun for the purpose of overthrowing the government if, in that individual's opinion, that government becomes too tyrannical. Proponents of this interpretation often cite carefully selected sentences and phrases from the Constitution's framers as proof that they are right. However, those passages are taken out of context and are often misleadingly edited. It is absurd to think that the founding fathers would prohibit treason in the Constitution (Article III, Section 3) and then protect the right to engage in it.

The logical extension of the view that individuals have a constitutional right to take up arms against the government is that the Constitution protects the private ownership of bazookas, hand grenades, surface-to-air missiles, tanks and nuclear weapons. Extremist groups already use the Second Amendment in court to defend themselves against charges of illegal possession of machine guns and military hardware. Who decides when the government has crossed the line into tyranny?

The beauty of the Constitution lies in its affirmation that the people have the power to control their destinies and their government in peaceful ways – through the ballot box, through our system of checks and balances, in-

"The beauty of the Constitution lies in its affirmation that the people have the power to control their destinies and their government in peaceful ways ... and not through the barrel of a gun."

cluding the courts – and not through the barrel of a gun.

In the Courts. Don't take my word for it. The Supreme Court and every federal appellate court in this country have ruled that the Second Amendment protects only the right to keep and bear arms in the context of a well-regulated militia. This issue has been settled since the 1939 Supreme Court ruling in United States v. Miller, in which the high court ruled that the obvious purpose of the Second Amendment was to ensure an effective state militia. Since that ruling, at least 62 other lower federal and state court decisions have rejected the individualrights interpretation of the amendment.

Despite this well-established legal doctrine, the recent lower court decision of *United States v. Emerson*, has received significant media and public attention. In that decision, the district court went against all federal court precedent and found that a federal law prohibiting an individual under a domestic restraining order from possessing a firearm violates the individual's Second Amendment right. That decision has been appealed to the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals.

Gun Laws Work. The legal and historical record is clear: gun laws are constitutional. More importantly, they work. Since the Brady Law went into effect in 1994, background checks have stopped more than 690,000 prohibited purchasers from buying guns. Not coincidentally, violent crime – particularly gun crime – has plummeted

to a 30-year low. Fewer people are dying because fewer guns are being used in crime. And we have achieved these successes without preventing law-abiding citizens from owning guns.

Sadly, the NRA and opponents of gun control continue to use mythical "Second Amendment rights" as an obstacle to commonsense gun proposals, be it bans of armor-piercing bul-

lets, background checks at gun shows or child-safety locks. Worse still, it is clear that the current administration is beholden to the NRA, which bragged during the presidential campaign that if George W. Bush were elected, it would be working out of the White House. Attorney General John Ashcroft has taken the dangerous step of changing the Justice Department's position on the Second Amendment to reflect the NRA's discredited "individualrights" position. This would reverse the position held by Republican and Democratic administrations alike for 30 years, and it would only make defending reasonable gun laws - laws that Americans overwhelmingly support - more difficult.

Our Constitution established the greatest republic the world has known. But the founding fathers never intended the Second Amendment to be a wholesale license for people to buy handguns without background checks, or to permit 15-year-olds to own AK-47s, or to allow parents to leave a loaded gun within a

child's reach.

Something is wrong when a child born in the United States is 12 times more likely to die from guns than one born in 26 other major industrialized nations. And it isn't the fault of the Constitution, but rather its warped interpretation and abuse by the powerful gun lobby.

Sarah Brady is chairwoman of the Brady Campaign and Brady Center to Prevent Gun Violence.

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ISLAM CAN'T ESCAPE BLAME FOR SEPT. 11

Terrorist attacks prove Muslims must rethink the way they apply their religion.

BY AMIR TAHERI

his has nothing to do with Islam," British Prime Minister Tony
Blair recently told a delegation of Muslims at a meeting at 10 Downing St., referring to the Sept. 11 attacks against the World Trade Center and the Pentagon.

Blair was echoing a view, popular both in Europe and the United States, that it is impolite – not to say impolitic – to subject Islam to any criticism. Yet to claim the attacks had nothing to do with Islam amounts to a whitewash. It is not only disingenuous but also a disservice to Muslims, who need to cast a critical glance at

A Muslim student takes part in a peace protest outside the U.S. Embassy in Jakarta, Indonesia, following the Sept. 11 attacks on America, demanding that the United States refrain from attacking Afghanistan. corbis

the way their faith is taught, lived and practiced.

Even worse, the refusal to subject Islam to rational analysis is a recipe for further fanaticism. Unless we believe those who claim the Sept. 11 attacks were organized by Israel, we have to assume that Osama bin Laden and al-Qaida were responsible. And since there is no mechanism for excommunication in Islam, bin Laden and his gang have every right to describe themselves as Muslims.

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Al-Qaida did not materialize out of thin air. Nor has it been operating in a vacuum. Bin Laden belongs to a prominent Yemeni-Saudi family that makes much of its Islamic credentials. He began his militant career in 1984 as a fund-raiser for Afghans fighting the communist regime in Kabul in the name of Islam. He had offices in a dozen Muslim countries, none of which regarded his activities as un-Islamic.

In 1993, bin Laden was divested of his Saudi passport but was warmly welcomed in Sudan, where a fundamentalist regime is in power. Later, bin Laden was the star of an international conference of Muslim fundamentalists organized in Khartoum by the thenstrongman Hassan al-Turabi. He was elected a member of the Supreme Council, whose task is to promote a radical brand of Islam throughout the world. That gave him the right to call himself a "sheik" and issue religious fatwas, or edicts. Again, since there is no clerical hierarchy in Islam, there was no reason why bin Laden could not claim such authority.

Once bin Laden was forced to leave Sudan (under U.S. pressure), he was welcomed in his ancestral homeland of Yemen, another Muslim country. From there he went to Pakistan, the world's second most populous Muslim nation, where he was welcomed not only by the army but also by virtually all of Pakistan's Islamic parties, which

"To claim the attacks had nothing to do with Islam amounts to a whitewash. [It is] also a disservice to Muslims, who need to cast a critical glance at the way their faith is taught, lived and practiced."

continue to support him.

From Pakistan, bin Laden shifted to Afghanistan, where the Taliban had established what they claimed to be "the only truly Islamic government." To say that bin Laden has nothing to do with Islam and Muslims, therefore, requires a big leap of imagination.

When pressed hard, some Muslim leaders admit that bin Laden is "part of Islam," but try to minimize his place. Dalil Boubakeur, a French Muslim leader, says that bin Laden does not represent more than 1 percent of Muslims. Some comfort. That 1 percent means almost 13 mil-

lion people.

There is more. All but one of the world's remaining military regimes are in Muslim countries. With the exception of Turkey and Bangladesh, there are no real elections in any Muslim country. Of the current 30 active conflicts in the world, no fewer than 28 concern Muslim governments and/or communities. Two-thirds of the world's political prisoners are held in Muslim countries, which also carry out 80 percent of all executions each year.

Anyone familiar with textbooks in most Muslim countries would know the twisted view of the world they propagate and the hatred they promote. Anyone who follows the media in the Muslim world would know that the verbal version of the Sept. 11 attacks is an almost daily fare. Go to the Internet and check the editorials of virtually any Muslim paper on Sept. 10 and see what they were saying about the West in general and the United States in particular. Anyone listening to a sermon in virtually any mosque, including many in the West, would be shocked by the vehemence of the anti-Western, especially anti-American, sentiments expressed.

It is both dishonest and dangerous for Muslims to remain in a state of denial. And yet a state of denial is what we have. When Iran's Khomeinists burned 600 people alive in a cinema, the whitewashers said that it had nothing to do with Islam. When the same gang took the American

"Anyone listening to a sermon in virtually any mosque, including many in the West, would be shocked by the vehemence of the anti-Western, especially anti-American, sentiments expressed."

diplomats hostage in Tehran, again the whitewash party insisted that had nothing to do with Islam. And when the suicide bombings bloodied Beirut, we were told that Islam had nothing to do with them.

The Muslim world today is full of bigotry, fanaticism, hypocrisy and plain ignorance – all of which create a breeding ground for criminals like bin Laden. The principal victims of these criminals are Muslims, who are prevented from developing a modern political culture without which they cannot reform their societies and rebuild their economies.

What I am saying is not meant as critique of Islam as a belief system: that's an issue for theologians, and people should be free to believe whatever they like. What is needed is a critique of Islam as an existential reality. The Sept. 11 tragedies should trigger a rethink of the way Muslims live Islam. We should start with condemning those attacks without "ifs" and "buts." Sadly, the way we Muslims live Islam today is a far cry from the way our ancestors lived it in the golden age when Islam was a builder of civilization, not a force for repression, terror and destruction.

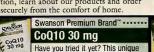
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Total Control of the President of the Pr

It took a catastrophe to corral America's anti-terrorism forces.

BY DONALD LAMBRO

The catastrophic terrorist attacks on the United States Sept. 11 have forced America to conduct a nationwide reexamination of how we defend our homeland.

The suicidal airline hijackers followed by random anthrax attacks not only exposed America's susceptibility to long-known terrorist threats, but they underscored how vulnerable the United States remains in so many other areas: nuclear power plants, reservoirs, hydroelectric dams, ports, rails, bridges, tunnels, chemical plants and shipments, and fertilizer-storage facilities that possess the ingredients to make weapons of devastating explosive power. And that is just the beginning.

One study by the Center for Strategic and International Studies said, "250 pounds of anthrax spores, spread efficiently over the Washington metropolitan area, could cause up to 3 million deaths, more than from a 1-megaton hydrogen bomb."

As valid as these warnings may be, it would be wildly inaccurate to say the government all but ignored the terrorist threat before the attacks.

One month before terrorists destroyed the World Trade Center towers and tore a huge chunk out of the Pentagon, the Office of Management and Budget released its annual report to Congress on combating terrorism. That report showed that the government was spending \$12 billion a year, spread out over dozens of federal departments and agencies, to protect the country from terrorist attacks.

Funding ranged from \$4.8 billion for aviation security to \$1.7 billion for defense against weapons of mass destruction. Moreover, Congress has not been tight about anti-terrorism spending in recent years, boosting its budget by 67 percent since 1998.

What Congress did not think about doing until after the attacks –

TONE TO NEED WAR T

President Bush handpicked former Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Ridge to head the Office of Homeland Security, coordinating more than 40 federal agencies. AP

and what it has never been good at doing – was coordinate its spending. "One agency usually did not know what the other agency was doing. There was no overall strategic plan that guided us," a senior administration official said.

All too often money was thrown at the problem, with no single entity looking at the larger picture. OMB says funding was scattered across the departments of State, Treasury, Veterans Affairs, Transportation, Health and Human Services, Education, Commerce, Justice, Interior, Labor, Energy and Agriculture, along with the Environmental Protection Agency, Federal Emergency Management Agency, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and dozens more.

But the lack of central coordination was painfully evident in the aftermath of the attacks. Each federal agency was speaking for itself, sometimes giving out contradictory or incomplete information, especially when the mailed anthrax story broke. The public heard many voices in the government that further added to the confusion.

Office at the Top. In the days that followed the attacks, Congress rushed to appropriate additional funds for relief, recovery and the war on terrorism – the total could easily approach \$200 billion when all the bills are tallied. But no central authority was established to

see that the multiple agencies dividing up \$40 billion in initial funds were working in tandem with one another, or that the agencies even talked to one another – especially the intelligence agencies. Nor was anyone ensuring these agencies would be ready to respond to unforeseen threats of even greater magnitude.

The problem called for an office of homeland defense, an idea proposed by a congressionally authorized terrorism task force chaired by Virginia Gov. James Gilmore in December 2000. The idea did not take flight until Vice President Dick Cheney began working on a terrorist defense plan soon after President Bush took office. Gilmore had briefed the administration on the task force's findings, and the president called for the creation of an Office of Homeland Security the day after the attack.

"It was clear to us that there were a lot of resources throughout the government and among the states to deal with the terrorist threat, but there needed to be an office at the top to coordinate all of it," Gilmore said. "The government had personnel, planning, systems and funding already in place. The real problem is that it was not coordinated into a national strategy. Each piece was working almost independently. There was a lack of focus and direction."

Former Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Ridge, picked by Bush to lead the new Cabinet-level office, is entrusted with overseeing the activities of more than 40 departments and agencies – from the CIA to FEMA. It's a monumental task.

Many in Congress fear that a White House "czar" to oversee government antiterrorism activities cannot succeed without broad budgetary and some operational control as well.

Former Rep. Lee H. Hamilton, an Indiana Democrat, told the newly created House Intelligence Subcommittee on Terrorism and Homeland Security, "I am suspicious of interagency cooperation. When you have a challenge of this urgency, you have to have authority in the (new) agency to act."

This war will be dramatically different "in the sense that it may never end. At least, not in our lifetime."

- Vice President Dick Cheney

But Ridge, a 56-year-old decorated Vietnam War combat veteran, has made it clear from the outset that he is a coordinator, not an operations man, who will be running the agencies and telling them what to do.

A Daunting Task. Working in the White House's West Wing with a staff of about 100 - most on detail from other agencies - Ridge brings to the job a vast amount of executive experience as a two-term governor and a former congressman.

Presiding over a government-wide council of department and agency chiefs, Ridge's job is to develop a national strategy to respond to terrorist attacks, as well as develop defensive strategies and plans to prevent future attacks. "We've got a lot of good people, a lot of good assets," Ridge said. "We just have to finetune how they operate with one

another. I'm not running FEMA. I'm not running the FBI."

Facing an incomprehensible terrorist network threat that spans more than 60 countries, Ridge compares the daunting challenge to fighting World War II, building the continental railroad and putting a man on the moon. Indeed, one White House official compared Ridge's job to that of Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower as supreme allied commander in World War II, in charge of coordinating and carrying out an unprecedented wartime campaign to defeat a hidden and elusive enemy. "The size and scope of this challenge are immense but not impossible," Ridge said.

But Gilmore's task force wanted Ridge's office to be given far more institutional authority than he now has. It proposed that in addition to being in charge of a preparedness plan, he be given "specified control of federal programs and budget," a sweeping level of authority that would be unprecedented in the executive branch.

Among the task force's other proposals that officials said were being considered by Ridge's office and by committees of Congress:

■ Create a "Special Committee for Combating Terrorism" whose



Florida National Guard soldiers are shown arriving for patrol duty at Tampa International Airport. AP

membership will be drawn from relevant committees of Congress.

- Beef up human-intelligence capability on the ground by rescinding CIA guidelines that forbid federal funds from being used to pay foreign informants for information. Develop new technologies to help identify and guard against terrorist infiltration in this country.
- Develop better and faster national coordination between federal, state and local authorities, including a model plan to be used by the states to defend against, prepare for and respond to terrorist attacks.
- Conduct inventories of state and local homeland defense programs for nationwide application.
- Develop and fund education and training programs at the state and local levels that attract "volunteers in critical response disciplines" in the fields of publichealth emergencies and other response and prevention areas.

Other ideas being considered or developed in the administration and in Congress would institutionalize or expand special anitterrorism teams and terrorismresponse units in key departments



Trace detection devices are commonplace at airport checkpoints after Sept. 11. The Sabre 2000 device is used to detect drug, explosive or chemical residue AP

"I am suspicious of interagency cooperation.

When you have a challenge of this urgency, you have to have authority in the (new) agency to act."

- Former Rep. Lee H. Hamilton, D-Ind.

or agencies. Among the proposals being looked at:

- Expansion of a bio-chemical terrorism response force within the military that was begun in 1996 in the wake of the sarin gas attack in Japan.
- Larger, better-funded, anti-terrorism programs in the Pentagon, the FBI, the CIA and other intelligence agencies, as well as the National Guard.

Guarding All Fronts. In addition to expanding the air marshal service and improving passenger screening at all airports, the government is moving on a number of other fronts to guard against potential terrorist threats.

EPA Administrator Christie
Todd Whitman has started a program to protect the nation's
drinking water supplies from terrorist attacks. She is working with
the nation's 168,000 public water
systems to identify any exposure
to terrorist attacks and to tighten
security and install better monitoring alarm systems that quickly
identify any contaminants before
they have done any harm.

Former White House counterterrorism czar Richard A. Clarke has been put in charge of a new Office of Cyber Security to protect the nation's computer networks from sabotage. He will report directly to Ridge.

Wayne Downing, a retired fourstar Army general and a former commander of U.S. Special Forces, has been put in charge of a new counter-terrorism office.

Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld is examining whether U.S. military forces need to be reorganized to meet the specialized demands of fighting terrorist wars now and in the future. Being looked at are smaller attack squads with easily maneuverable high-tech weaponry, a greater emphasis on special combat forces and covert assassination teams, and stepped-up use of paid foreign national mercenaries.

On the drawing board is a special combined-services homeland defense military force assigned to guard the nation's key infrastructure facilities, including airports, power plants, dams, harbors and other installations critical to the nation's safety.

In the meantime, tourist, work and education visas are going to be given much tighter scrutiny and perhaps be sharply cut back under certain circumstances. The government's entire immigration apparatus needs to be re-examined with an emphasis on strengthening its investigative and law enforcement arms, with deportation authority that cannot be challenged in court.

Congress has moved to give the Justice Department, the FBI and other law-enforcement agencies broader wiretap and detention powers to catch terrorists. The president has given the CIA authority to use "whatever means necessary" to eliminate Saudi terrorist mastermind Osama bin Laden and his network, along with an additional \$1 billion to do it.

All of this, along with other recommendations Ridge is likely to make, will require a lot more money than Congress has appropriated thus far, Gilmore says.

"There will be a need for additional training, equipment, planning and coordination, even more resources for the FBI and the CIA, for example, not to mention the military."

White House Budget Director Mitch Daniels, however, does not think this will mean busting the budget. He wants to shift funding from low priority and outdated programs to higher priority antiterrorism needs.

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Airlines will be able to fly more safely under a revolutionary irisscanning technology being developed for use in Europe that will identify passengers and track their movements. The pre-obtained data will be put in a computer chip in an ID card that travelers can get in advance for a small fee. Passengers can have their eyes quickly verified and thus bypass long screening lines.

Current baggage scanners can be slow and unreliable. But Invision Technology is developing three types of advanced screeners that can search 800 bags an hour for explosives and other dangerous materials. They are expected to be in full use in Europe by 2003.

As for the problem of anthraxfilled envelopes being sent through the mail, irradiation technology used to sterilize food could cleanse all of our mail of pathogens, including anthrax bacteria and spores.

Here at home, the airlines are reinforcing cockpit doors to prevent terrorists from taking over a plane. The government also is putting armed air marshals onboard. But we now have workable computer technology that would be able to take full control of an aircraft and land it at the nearest airport, if seized by terrorists.

Still, gaping holes remain to be filled in the federal government's

homeland defense system.
One of the biggest is the lack of training, equipment and other resources at the local level, particularly in response to biological, chemical and crude nuclear devices.

"The executive branch and the Congress have not paid sufficient attention to state and local capabilities for combating terrorism," Gilmore's task force reported. Only a "disproportionately small" amount of the \$12 billion spent preparing for terrorist attacks goes to state and local agencies.

Gilmore's warning to Ridge: "A federal strategy is not a national strategy. A national strategy is federal, state and local.

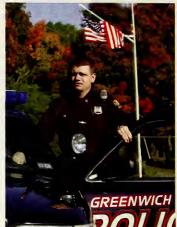
"There need to be new procedures put into place, protocols set, an understanding of what the best response strategies are going to need to be, a lot of exercises and a lot of funding for equipment and preparation," he said.

Concerned by this lack of preparedness at the state and local level, Congress passed the Defense Against Weapons of Mass Destruction Act in 1996 to finance emergency equipment and counterterrorism training for emergency disaster crews at the local level. About 200 training exercises have been conducted since then, and officials say they have adequately shown how under-prepared the nation is for a major terrorist disaster.

For example, many of the country's 3,000 public-health agencies have no e-mail to receive emergency notices. A mere 20 percent have plans ready to respond to bioterrorist attacks.

Six days before the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, former Sen. Sam Nunn, D-Ga., told a congressional investigating committee about the deeply disappointing results of a bioterrorism exercise dubbed "Dark Winter."

"It's a lucky thing for the United States that this was just a test and not a real emergency," Nunn said. "Our lack of preparation is a real emergency."



Greenwich, Conn., patrolman Robert Berry received special training in homeland security. Police officers in local communities across the country are now charged with frontline defense against terrorism. Ap

America is engaged in a 21st-century war unlike any we have ever fought. The two world wars as well as the Korean, Vietnam and Persian Gulf wars all had a beginning and an end. But this war will be dramatically different "in the sense that it may never end. At least, not in our lifetime," Cheney told Washington Post reporter Bob Woodward in October.

This means an effective homeland defense must be based on a war against terrorism that can never end as long as this kind of evil exists in the world. By relentlessly hunting down and destroying terrorists wherever they hide, by keeping them on the run, by remaining vigilant and prepared at home, and by enlisting everyone in the struggle against the tyranny of terror, we can ensure that America remains a sanctuary of safety and freedom for generations to come.

Donald Lambro is a Washingtonbased syndicated columnist and investigative reporter. He is a frequent contributor to The American Legion Magazine.

Article design: Doug Rollison





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Veterans' names were drawn from a pickle jar to determine who would own land after World War II. The jar can still be found in the museum at Tulelake.



No traffic will come. So Jacqui Krizo kills the engine right in the middle of a paved county road, gets out and doesn't bother to shut the car door. She walks to the shoulder and gazes across weed-blemished fields, parched in the hot August sunshine. She listens carefully, like a nurse for a lost heartbeat. "It's dead," she says. "Normally, you couldn't park right in the middle of the road, not this time of year, not here. The grain trucks would be going up and down. Now you don't even hear the frogs or the crickets.

It's just dead."

Such was the condition of last harvest season when irrigation water was denied to farmers of the Klamath Basin, located in the fertile high country where Oregon and California meet. Fields normally verdant with potato, barley, oat and alfalfa crops had to be replaced by spindly, unmarketable cover-grains whose main purpose was to keep the soil from blowing off the face of the earth.

The year was ruined here because a federal court ruled last spring that the Endangered Species Act of 1973 plays like a trump card over longstanding government guarantees to provide water for farms. Around the 1,000-population town of Tulelake, Calif., those guarantees were specifically written into homestead patents issued to returning war veterans who have spent the past half-century building a community and keeping an economy afloat in the imprint of a former lake bottom.

Free Land for Veterans. The Klamath Basin's first wave of veteran homesteaders rolled in after World War I, when honorably discharged soldiers and sailors received preference over other applicants wanting in on the government's offer of free, newly reclaimed, irrigable land. An American Legion post in Tulelake was formed primarily to help with negotiations between veterans and the government. Legionnaires worked to reduce by half the peracre fees farmers had to pay back to the government to cover the cost of dam construction. Groups

of homesteads were awarded five different times between 1922 and 1937, and another round was scheduled for 1942.

World War II delayed additional homestead movement until 1946 when the first of three pickle-jar drawings at the armory in Klamath Falls, Ore., determined who among that group of veterans would become landowners and who would not. The land lottery was viewed as a dual-edged act of postwar progressivism - both a thank-you to Americans who helped save the world and an opportunity to populate the basin with capable young men and women eager to "prove up" on the small farms and pump vitality into the economy. Homestead veterans of the Klamath Basin warranted a cover story in Life magazine on Jan. 20, 1947, and the layout inside portrayed a quirky country-western rendition of the Great American Dream - with Mom, Dad and the kids in cowboy boots, jeans and

Sucker

Punched

Veteran homesteaders

not the fish - may be the

basin's water war sends

ripples across America.

BY JEFF STOFFER

endangered species as one

discover that they -

"I never dreamed
I would own
land. It ... was a
wonderful
opportunity for
us, if we were
willing to work."

-Eleanor Bolesta



Eleanor Bolesta's World War II service as a WAVE qualified her for the land lottery. Courtesy Eleanor Bolesta

30 February 2002



World War II veteran Marion Palmer sifts through the dust where irrigated grain once grew. A federal court decision last April shut off the water and ruined most crops. Jeff stoffer

a post office in central California when her name was drawn – one of only three women to receive a homestead in the program. "I never dreamed I would own land. It was considered very valuable land and was a wonderful opportunity for us, if we were willing to work."

The Decisive Act. Fifty-two years after the last veteran's name was drawn from the pickle jar - which holds a place of honor in the county museum - farmers of the Klamath Basin returned to the national media spotlight. But the spring 2001 story was not one of postwar recovery. It was about betrayal. The same government that drained Tule and Lower Klamath lakes nearly a century ago to expose new farm land and build dams and canals to water it, simply closed off the head gates. The reason: to protect two endangered species of bottom-feeding sucker fish in upper Klamath Lake and to help threatened coho salmon downstream. It was a story that hit with tectonic might among those who live and work in natural-resource-dependent communities across America.

"They couldn't have done us any more harm with an atomic bomb," says George A. "Pug" Smith, who served as a Navy ambulance driver in the Philippines during World War II. He was only 24 years old and full of hope

hats, traipsing through the dirt; the house with a white-picket fence was instead a single-pane wooden barracks left over from Tulelake's World War II Japanese Relocation Camp. For those veterans whose names were drawn – exclusively children of the Depression – this lottery was the chance of a lifetime. "Amid scenes of anxiety and joy, out came the names of lucky veterans who ... are now established for life," the article observed.

Criteria for homestead eligibility included proof of military service during World War II, at least two years of experience in agriculture, at least \$2,000 of personal capital, and "habits of honesty, temperance, thrift and industry." Winners needed to farm for five years in order to gain clear title. The old relocation-camp buildings were available to homesteaders willing to haul them off. Thousands applied for the three drawings between 1946 and 1949, and more than 200 homesteads were awarded in that span, planting a fresh crop of young families in the basin.

"It was the most exciting thing

that ever happened to me," said Eleanor Bolesta, who was a 23-year-old veteran of the Navy's Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service program when her name was drawn. Trained as an aviation machinist's mate, she and her husband, Charles, a disabled Marine veteran, were barely making ends meet after the war. They were going through their savings and racking up medical bills. Both had taken temporary jobs at



By the early 1950s, young families like that of Phil and Barbara Krizo, shown here with their children, Dorothy and David, had sprouted up all across the Klamath Basin. War veterans formed the foundation of the new economy.

"How would you feel if you lost your job, your retirement benefits and four-fifths of the value of your home? Who knows what's going to happen next?"

- Eleanor Bolesta

when his name was drawn in the land lottery of 1947. "I felt very fortunate to get one."

Now, years after Smith and fellow irrigators fully paid off the irrigation project's construction cost, he wonders if this is when and how - the promise breaks. "If we can get the Endangered Species Act into perspective, it'll save the country," he says. "If not, we're down the tubes.'

A Progressive-Era Showcase. To drain 96,000 surface acres (about 13 miles by 15 miles) of lake and re-channel streams feeding those water bodies, the lower Klamath Basin represented bold engineering challenges - even for the indomitable spirit of the Progressive Era. After the federal government bought up property and acquired water rights from both states in the first decade of the century, excavating the dams and channels by hand and by horse through volcanic rock was no easy task. Rattlesnakes, mosquitoes, temperature extremes and the sheer cost of the project were daunting. Labor was hard to keep when picking apples elsewhere often paid better. In an essay for the Modoc County Historical Society, local historian Betty Lou Byrne-Shirley described the Klamath as "one of the most ambitious reclamation projects in the West during the first part of the century."

President Theodore Roosevelt, who believed balanced management of a fast-growing American West was achievable through smart farming and the preservation of specially designated natural reserves, once

stated: "The object is not to lock up natural resources but to use them in a way that would increase their yield for the next generation. No wise use of a farm exhausts its fertility."

The Progressive Era - America's quantum leap from the 19th to the 20th century – produced such innovations as laws to protect wildlife from illegal hunting and shipment. That was an issue in the early 1900s for Tule Lake, where unrestricted commercial hunters harvested wild birds for their plumes alone or to supply high-end restaurants with exotic meat. Not coincidentally born around the same time were the the U.S. Forest Service and the Bureau of Reclamation.

nation's first federal bird reserves. The movement was all about places like the Klamath Basin,

Irrigators like Fred and Velma Robison paid off construction of federally built dams and canals in the basin before the water was shut off to protect

which ultimately became home to nine dams, some 400 miles of canals, dozens of pumps, drains, sumps, and ditches. But along with the irrigation and flood-control structures came three national wildlife refuges, the Modoc National Forest and Lava Beds National Monument. The region evolved into a showcase for the harmony that can be struck between progress and preservation. Tulelake, Calif., a community that sprang to life by virtue of irrigated farms and wildlife refuges, amply fulfilled the new vision for the 20th century.

But we're not in that century anymore.

Decision Without Debate, Veteran homesteader Marion Palmer remembers a man who came by his family's farm every so often during the Depression. The man

was selling suckers he had caught in upper Klamath Lake. "You were dang glad to get them," said Palmer, whose father, a World War I veteran, was granted a homestead southwest of Tulelake in 1932. "Times were lean. People did everything and anything they could to make money. And you either worked or you starved to death.'

Times had certainly changed by 1988 when the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service added shortnose and Lost River suckers to the federal endangered species list. Eight years later, the southern Oregon and northern California coastal coho salmon were listed as threatened species under the ESA. Those designations meant farmers, who say they only use about 2 percent of the



downstream flow for irrigation, had to share their water more generously with the fish during dry times. Growers agreed to curtail water use during drought years to maintain minimum levels in the lake and streams.

But a lawsuit filed later by environmental, tribal and fishing groups produced a new biological opinion adopted by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in 2001. That opinion called for even tighter restrictions on water delivery in the basin. So tight, in fact, that no water at all would be available for most of the basin's farms and two of the wildlife refuges - even in a normal precipitation year. That opinion, and the water-level regulations that accompanied it, did not just tip the scales; it tipped them over. "We didn't realize what was happening until it happened to us," said Bolesta, who relies on income from property she leases to a neighbor who got virtually no water last year. "Everyone was affected."

Irrigators appealed. But U.S. District Court Judge Ann Aiken denied their request for an injunction on the grounds that "... the law requires the protection of suckers and salmon as endangered and threatened species and as tribal trust resources, even if (the irrigators) disagree with the manner in which the fish are protected."

After the ruling, the Klamath Water Users Association issued a report questioning the kind of science in which "fish require well over 100 percent of all the water in the basin ... Such requirements cannot be met by natural processes." The irrigators argued that the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation does not have authority to re-allocate

By the time water was released for farms in the basin, it was too late. Eleanor Bolesta, who relies on income from land she leases to a neighbor, watched the canal next to her house turn into weed soup. Jest Stoffer

senior water rights from farmers to fish, that the water-delivery system is owned and maintained by the irrigators and not the federal government, and that the Klamath Basin crisis exposed enough deficiencies in the ESA that the law "should be reformed or discarded and re-drafted."

The biggest frustration in all of this, says Marty Macy – a former Marine fighter pilot and president of the Tulelake Growers Association – is that irrigators didn't even have an opportunity to debate the decision to close the headgates last April 6. "Here we are in the 21st century, and the only plan we could come up with is zero delivery? We, to this day, do not know the process of how this opinion was arrived at. We were not at the table."

Approximately 1,400 family farms went dry while upper Klamath Lake filled to capacity last summer. Economic losses in the basin were estimated between \$250 million and \$300 million. "The worst thing it did was it ripped the heart out of our financial institutions," explained Macy, the son of a homestead veteran, who farms and sprays crops in the basin. "Confidence in what we're doing was lost. How are you going to do anything if you don't have any water?"

Without the usual influx of seasonal workers, main-street businesses were equally jolted by the decision. "This is an agricultural community," said Tony Giacomelli, owner of Jock's Supermarket in Tulelake. "That's the business here. The sense of community runs deep, and if this goes on one more year, the community will be bankrupt ... It's shortening people's lives, just the stress of it."

"We're angry," Bolesta said.
"How would you feel if you lost
your job, your retirement benefits
and four-fifths of the value of your
home? Who knows what's going to
happen next? There won't be any

rural America left if this keeps up."

The Klamath Tea Party. Following the decision, thousands of farmers, ranchers, miners, loggers and national media poured into the basin to protest or bear witness to the furious response. On May 7, some 18,000 people filled the streets of Klamath Falls, Ore., for a "bucket-brigade" rally where a container of water was filled from the upper lake and handed, one person to the next, in a human chain through the city before it was dumped into the main canal. Billboards with slogans like "CALL 911 SOME SUCKER STOLE OUR WATER" started popping up along the highways. One storefront in Tulelake proclaimed "Feed the feds ... to the fish." A tent city of protesters set up camp at the head gate. A relief fund was established to help families in the most serious need.

The local sheriff's department refused to intervene, and the FBI had to be called in after protesters snipped through a fence and used a cutting torch to open a head gate that sent water pouring into the canal. At 78 years of age, Eleanor Bolesta was among those

who broke in.

"It's desperate times for desperate measures ... it appears to me that (people) are trying to save their lives," Klamath County

"The worst thing it did was it ripped the heart out of our financial institutions."

- Marty Macy



Former fighter pilot Marty Macy came back to Tulelake, after a career in the Marine Corps, to farm and work in his family's aerial spraying service. His second career may be in leopardy. Jet stoffer

Sheriff Tim Evinger told *The New York Times*, which was among the national media that covered the crisis. The story dominated headlines in Oregon and northern California and appeared in almost all

"They couldn't have done us any more harm with an atomic bomb."

- George A. "Pug" Smith



Pug and Teresa Smith lamented the summer of 2001 when they paid thousands of dollars in irrigation fees only to water their lawn. Jeff stoffer

major national newspapers, radio and television news.

On Aug. 1, Secretary of the Interior Gale Norton concluded that lake levels were high enough to release 75,000 acre feet of water about one-sixth of the normal delivery – from the upper lake. The phrase "too little, too late" does not scratch the surface. Most of the crops were lost by that time, and it was too late to plant anything new. Some alfalfa came of it.

In the early fall, congressional leaders from both states weighed in with federal budget requests to compensate farmers devastated by the sucker ruling. But most of that push came after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, and – with troops on their way to Afghanistan and New York City to repair – the nation's budgetary focus could not have been aimed in a more different direction than the Klamath Basin. "I don't think anybody is going to call this one a walk in the park," Sen. Ron Wyden, D-Ore., said after

he and Sen. Gordon Smith, R-Ore., sent a letter asking Congress for \$126 million in aid for the basin's farmers. Smith's chief of staff said the request for relief was a matter of trying "to make sure the farmers and ranchers are still there next year. This doesn't do much for the long term."

'You don't compensate a veteran who survived the Bataan Death March by telling him we're going to pay you off so you can leave, said Macy, who, like many farmers in the basin, thinks there's much more to this than saving the suckers. Macy said he believes basin farmers have been targeted for "rural cleansing" by environmental organizations, federal bureaucracies, Klamath and Yurok tribes who claim cultural and treaty rights to protect the fish, along with politicians who resist digging into the ESA out of fear they will be perceived as weakening it. "Once we took this issue and started to look at all the layers and lay-

commentary

The high price of environmentally friendly business

BY ARLYNN LEIBER PRESSER

Clean air, clean land, clean water. These are the gifts God gave to man. We are charged with the task of preserving and, when possible, improving them for future generations. But since the first apple core was tossed curbside at the Garden of Eden, mankind has always had a little cleaning up to do. And the question is the same that was posed by Eve to Adam: who cleans up?

For much of history, the waste products of commerce have been dumped, deposited, buried, tossed and incinerated without much thought given to environmental impact. Thirty years ago, the air was hazy, the forest preserves were littered and fish were dying. America rose to the challenge, declaring it was time to clean up. The federal government stepped in with the Clean Water and Clean Air Acts. The Environmental Protection Agency was created to manage and affix responsibility for keeping our country clean. Littering is recognized as a morally reprehensible act, above and beyond its illegality. Burning leaves on the curb? Absolutely not. Recycling? You bet. And that factory just outside of town? Well, its smokestacks haven't been active for years.

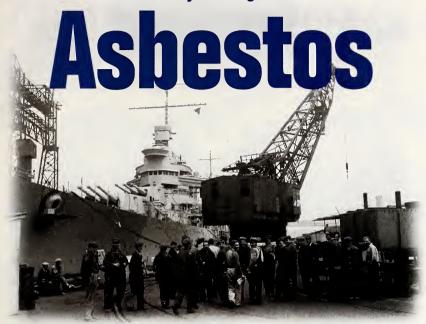
And that might be part of the problem.

Environmental Protection Agencies, state and federal alike, have held businesses accountable for their

actions in two ways: requiring companies to pay clean-up costs and assessing punitive damages to make businesses think twice about flouting the law. Fred Smith of the Competitive Enterprise Institute estimates that American companies have spent up to \$300 billion since 1970 cleaning up the environment. It's a cost, he says, that has been passed along to consumers – an extra tax on doing business. "It's actually a larger tax than the corporate tax that we ask businesses to pay," Smith says.

And it's growing. Environmental agencies have been assessing charges using the controversial statistical technique known as contingent valuation which tries to hold businesses accountable for damage to the environment that can't be repaired. Under this method, a cross-section of individuals is asked how much it values particular natural resources. For instance, you might ask yourself how much you would be willing to pay to ensure the survival of fish that swim in a lake near your home. A few dollars a month? Take that dollar amount and multiply it by the population of your town, your state, your country. Don't take out your checkbook - that amount is what the company that pollutes the lake will have to pay. It's a system that has netted governmental clean-up operations a greatly appreciated bonus. But some statisticians say it's kooky - one study ⇒see Presser, page 36

They dedicated their best years to keeping America strong... **Decades later many would get sick from the**



From the 1930s to 1965 the Brooklyn Navy Yard teemed with activity. Thousands of men and women worked there - and at hundreds of other shipyards, factories, powerhouses and construction sites — to keep America strong through times of war and peace.

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ers and layers, it started to stink more and more," Macy said. "The hidden agenda is to turn Tule Lake into an Everglades of the West."

"It's going to happen everywhere in the West," added Palmer, who served in Europe as an Army infantry man during World War II. "It's going to happen until someone gets hurt ... when they see shelves go empty. That's the urban society we live in today."

Jacqui Krizo – a horseradish grower who is both a daughter and daughter-in-law of homestead veterans – could not help but acknowledge the irony of it all. "These are the most patriotic people in the world," she said. "And here they are fighting their



Approximately 18,000 demonstrators poured onto the streets of Klamath Falls, Ore., last spring to protest the decision. Larry Turner

government."

Still, Krizo explained, the veterans who populate the lower Klamath Basin didn't hesitate to hoist their flags in solidarity when America went to war last fall. And after the events of Sept. 11, tent-city protesters at the head gates broke camp, vowing to return after the first of the year if balance could not be restored in time for spring

planting. They went into the winter looking for their elected officials to come up with answers, hoping their future isn't permanently entangled in two different visions for the future of farming and resource management, not just in the Klamath Basin, but everywhere in America.

"We knew how to co-exist with these species for many, many years," Macy said. "We may not be biologists or botanists, but we know our history ... and we know that if we don't stop it here, you're next."

Jeff Stoffer is the managing editor of The American Legion Magazine.

Article design: Holly K. Soria

commentary

[Presser] in Texas concluded that its residents were willing to pay an average of \$7.13 per month to save the whooping crane. Actually, they were willing to have someone else pay that amount. And it came out to a state total of \$109 million, which most folks would agree is a bit hefty.

Still, you might argue that anyone who pollutes takes chances about the price they'll have to pay. But some companies that have done absolutely nothing wrong have found themselves stuck with the bill for a cleanup. At a landfill in New Jersey, the EPA sued nine major polluters, but those polluters turned around and sued more than 200 smaller entities for their share of the damage. When the case settled in 1996, 150 businesses and 100 municipal boards shared the costs of a \$30 million cleanup. But some, if not most, of those smaller entities had disposed of nothing more lethal than ordinary trash. Hopefully, some sanity will return to the environmental field with the Gillmor-Pallone bill, which would exempt small contributors to Superfund sites from cleanup costs. Sponsors Paul Gillmor, R-Ohio, and Frank Pallone, D-N.J., celebrated its passage in the House (419-0) last July and are watching for a Senate companion bill.

We don't know much about the argument between Adam and Eve concerning clean-up chores, but maybe they didn't argue at all. Maybe they cooperated – and maybe business and regulatory agencies can, too. Look for cap-and-trade programs that encourage businesses to use the most American of traits – ingenuity, ambition and efficiency. They're getting a new look by our government, and business leaders would say it's about time.

The programs work like this: Suppose 10 factories surround Lake Pristine and each dumps effluents into the lake, which is just within the borders of Metro City. Metro's mayor would commission a study to determine the level of pollution which Pristine can safely endure, and the 10 factories are then given the opportunity to purchase the right to pollute the lake. That's right - the 10 factories can purchase the right to pollute, but only up to the maximum amount (the "cap") of effluents. Each factory will have to purchase a fractional right to pollute. But each factory would like to decrease its need to pollute because under the cap-and-trade program, a factory that pollutes less than its purchased right may sell or trade part of its pollution rights to another factory. The factory that figures out how to reduce its effluents will make money. The race to create greater levels of efficiency will be on, especially if the mayor of Metro City puts into place a 1percent reduction of the total pollutants each year.

And what about the money Metro City gets at the pollution-rights auction? Options could include using the money for government cleanups to other troubled environmental issues or research to promote cross-industry efficiencies.

Cap-and-trade is a program that would make captains of industry and environmentalists work as partners instead of adversaries. It would take away the name-calling, lawsuits and rancor which has characterized much of the thinking about environmental protection.

Maybe the best thing to remember is that when the apple core falls and we ask who cleans up – or, at least, who pays – the best answer is, "We all do, and let's do it together."

ArLynn Leiber Presser is a Chicago-area lawyer and writer.





WHERE HAVE ALL WHERE HAVE ALL THE Veapons GONE?

From office supplies to Stinger missiles, more military equipment than you might think has turned up missing.

BY SUSAN KATZ KEATING

n 1999, Rep. Floyd Spence, R-S.C., then chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, asked government investigators to examine various aspects of how the U.S. military manages its inventory. Spence, who died in August, was mainly concerned about what was being done with excess equipment. But investigators working on his behalf made a disturbing discovery: certain sensitive defense items had literally vanished. Those items included a digital computer used for countermeasures on the E-2 aircraft and 18 computers used for guiding MK-46 torpedoes. In a report to Congress, investigators wrote that they were concerned about the lost items "because they could be misused if they get in the wrong hands."

Computers aren't all. In recent years, billions of dollars worth of material disappeared from the U.S. military. In 1997, the General Accounting Office named inventory management to its list of government areas most prone to fraud, waste and abuse. Now, in light of the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, security experts fear that at least some of that missing material may be within grasp of hostile hands.

"The stuff is out there somewhere," says Virginia-based terrorism expert Kyle Olsen. "If it's being offered for sale on the black market, it would certainly be attractive to any terrorist with a fat bankroll."

Not all of the missing items are weapons. Unaccounted goods include such mundane materials as clothing and office supplies. But the roster also includes rifles, grenades, TNT, a machine gun and, amazingly, some handheld missiles and rockets.

The vast majority of materials that vanish do so while in transit from one site to another. In fiscal year 1998, for example, the Army could not account for some \$900 million worth of goods while they were being shipped. From 1996 to 1998, the Navy lost track of more than \$3 billion of in-transit items. Most items that turn up missing are not weapons. But from April 1997 to March 1998, the Pentagon calculated that more than 283,000 sensitive military items disappeared while in transit.

Some of the missing items were excess inventory en route to disposal. But others were destined for active duty and never arrived. "You can write off a large portion of that to sloppy bookkeeping," says one congressional source familiar with the problem. "Sometimes the stuff simply isn't recorded in the right ledger. Or it flatout gets forgotten."



Certain items, it seems, would be hard to lose and forget. Nevertheless, that is what happened after the Gulf War. In 1992, some Pakistanis who were helping clean up after Operation Desert Storm were startled to find a U.S.owned Stinger missile tucked inside a storage facility in Kuwait. Instead of promptly returning the missile, Kuwaiti authorities waited another four years before giving it back. The Army was shocked to receive it. According to Army records, all 6,373 Stingers that were sent to Kuwait had already been returned. No one realized that one deadly Stinger was missing.

"People have always tried to steal weapons from the U.S. military. The most famous example is John Brown's raid on Harper's Ferry during the Civil War."

 Robert Bateman, Center for Strategic and International Studies

The Marine Corps, meanwhile, reported three AT4 rockets missing from shipments returning from Desert Storm. The Naval Criminal Investigative Service launched an inquiry and could not determine whether the rockets had been used and not recorded, if they had been lost or, worse yet, stolen.

Thefts from the military are nothing new. "People have always tried to steal weapons from the U.S. military," says Robert Bateman of the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington. "The most famous example is John Brown's raid on Harper's Ferry during the Civil War."

To their credit, modern military units that house weapons and ordnance are notoriously strict about keeping track of munitions. One Army officer recalls that a number of years ago, a rifle was reported missing from his infantry unit. The entire company was locked down for 72 hours while authorities scoured the building. It turned out that the rifle never left the weapons room. A weary clerk simply overlooked it.

Nevertheless, thefts have occurred. In 1987, two San Francisco police officers and a Marine corporal were charged with stealing munitions from Camp Pendleton, Calif. In 1994, two men were charged with stealing about \$500,000 worth of equipment from an Army Reserve center in Illinois. And in 1996, seven men were indicted for conspiracy in an ongoing scheme that netted the thieves some \$13 million in

equipment belonging to Fort Mc-Coy, Wis.

Most cases are not nearly as dramatic. Indeed, even most disappearances are small scale. Between 1993 and 1996, some 20 pounds of C-4 explosives vanished from Army, Navy and Army National Guard control. From 1992 through 1996, 117 firearms and other dangerous materials disappeared.

But as Congress noted last year, small weapons and plastic explosives must be closely monitored because they are particularly useful to terrorists. Small, conventional weapons such as handguns, rifles and grenades, for example, are favored by terrorists because they are easy to hide and carry. It doesn't take much. A single machine gun can wreak untold havoc. Less than a pound of the explosive Semtex, which is similar to C-4, was used to bring down Pan Am Flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland, in 1988.

Experts caution that defense material already gone is simply



Marines train at Camp Pendleton, Calif., where investigators charged two police officers and a Marine with stealing munitions from the base. Many other reports of missing weapons, however, have proven to be simple bookkeeping errors. us warnes

that: gone. And nobody knows where it is. As GAO investigators reported in 1997, the Pentagon "could not determine whether any of the unrecovered stolen DoD weapons were in the hands of terrorists or other extremists."

In 1996, a concerned Congress included a provision in the Antiterrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act, requiring the attorney general and the Pentagon to report thefts of military material that may be useful to terrorists.

The services, meanwhile, implemented a series of strict controls requiring even greater vigilance over sensitive material, particularly while in transit.

The vigilance must be thorough and unrelenting. Current events mandate that we accept nothing less.

□

Susan Katz Keating is a freelance writer and frequent contributor to The American Legion Magazine.

Article design: Doug Rollison

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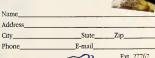
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Fifteen years after the popular movie, the real Adrian Cronauer talks fact and fiction behind the film.

BY ADRIAN CRONAUER

've gotta ask you something," the perky young lady says.
"Here it comes," I think. "The

No. 1 question."
"How much of that film 'Good

Morning Vietnam!' was real?"
I smile. "Know anyone who's

been in the military?"
"My dad was Navy."

"He'll tell you. If I did even half what Robin Williams did in the film, I'd still be in Leavenworth instead of here in Washington."

She laughs. "I didn't really think you could have gotten away with all that."

Like most people, she realizes Hollywood is interested only in a good story, not perfect accuracy.

As the real U.S. Air Force disc jockey, I am often asked if Robin Williams portrayed me accurately in the film "Good Morning Vietnam!" Yes and no, I respond.

The film was a collaborative effort by Williams' manager Larry Bresner, myself, my partner Ben Moses and writer Mitch Markowitz. More than once in a story conference I heard, "Hey, that's a great incident; we'll have to use it in the movie. Of course, we'll change it completely." I didn't object because the film wasn't intended to be an accurate biography; it was supposed to be entertaining.

I often say that our characters weren't based on real people. They're all stereotypes, if only for legal reasons like avoiding libel or invasion of privacy. On the other hand, mention any specific character and I could probably think of at least a half dozen people I knew during my Air Force years.

Many things in the film were true, while others were exaggerated or made up for the sake of entertainment.

I did teach English during my

off-duty time, but I didn't teach my class to swear and use New York street slang, and I was not teaching English because I wanted to meet a certain, particularly beautiful Vietnamese girl.

Most Saigon residents were reluctant to socialize with Americans. I reasoned that, like most cultures, the Vietnamese respect teachers. By becoming one, I got to know a wide variety of Vietnamese people. But I still don't know if any of them were

Viet Cong.

Armed Forces Radio was there to boost morale. Our surveys showed, not surprisingly, that a vast majority of listeners were young men in their late teens and early 20s. Few had been outside the United States; many had never even been outside their hometowns. The military had, literally, picked them up, transported them halfway around the world and dumped them into an alien environment. To counter the resulting homesickness, we tried to sound like radio stations back home.

In America, listeners are used to choosing from any number of radio stations. In Saigon, though, if you only spoke English, our station was the only game in town. So we programmed "blocks." There was the top-40 show, the country show, the soul-music show and others. Of course, we also carried news, discussion and other talk programs.

I tried to expand the amount of popular music. I also tried to make the total sound of the station more like stateside radio. We didn't have commercials, but we did air publicservice announcements, like, don't forget to take your malaria pills, and mail early to ensure your Christmas gifts reach home in time. My approach was to treat PSAs as one would a commercial: use attention getters at the beginning, put in a dramatic or humorous scene. use music and sound effects.

The movie shows me facing

"In America, listeners are used to choosing any number of radio stations, depending on preference. In Saigon, though, if you spoke English, our station was the only game in town."

opposition from many of my radio colleagues. In reality, I dealt more with apathy. "Well, yeah, I guess that sounds fine. But it sounded all right to me the way it was. Why fix something that isn't broken?" When I went into the field to do interviews, though, I found the troops liked what I was doing.

There was news censorship but no nall stories. Only two categories were subject to advance clearance: anything about the military whether or not it had to do with Vietnam and anything to do with Vietnam whether or not it had to do with the military. In either case, rarely did such content get on the air.

We didn't have the Bobbsey Twins sitting at the radio station, red pencils in hand. Instead, clearance was done by telephone through the public information office at Military Assistance Command, Vietnam, headquarters of Gen. William Westmoreland.

An example of the censorship we endured showed up in the movie as the bombing scene at Jimmy Waugh's restaurant. Yes, I really was in a restaurant shortly before the Viet Cong hit it, although it wasn't much like the movie scene. The actual incident involved an eatery called My Chan Floating Restaurant. As the name implies, it was a boat anchored in the Saigon River. There were tables and chairs on deck; a nice breeze came over the water. and the food was good, so radio staffers would go there frequently for dinner.

One evening in 1965, four of us were there. About five minutes after we had finished eating and left the restaurant, the Viet Cong

set off a claymore mine. The exploding mine sent out a spray of shrapnel, raking the entire side of the boat and causing both physical injury and panic. Several minutes later – while people were frantically struggling to get ashore – a second charge, a narrow one, was aimed directly at the gangplank.

Nearby, we heard the sirens and commotion. We ran back to the boat and gathered what information we could, then went to the radio station to write our news report.

We called the duty officer at MACV and read him our story. He said we couldn't broadcast it because there was no official word about a bombing. We countered that we had been there and seen it. He responded he had no report of casualties.

"With due respect, sir," we replied, "we've seen heads severed from torsos. Barring the Second Coming, they aren't going to get up and walk away!"



At the console, Cronauer used sound effects, dramatic or humorous scenes and music to make mundane public service announcements more entertaining.

We continued to argue but the final answer was "No." The final reason was, "Suppose we're wrong."

I could tell you there was a vast conspiracy to keep American military personnel in ignorance, but I don't believe that's true. Instead, there were two understandable factors at play often working in tandem.

The first was simply that you couldn't put certain things on the air in a war zone for fear of helping your enemy - troop movements, for instance. There were more subtle cases of this principle, too - take, for example, weather forecasts. Armed Forces Radio made a conscious effort to sound like a station back home. All stateside stations gave the weather. We didn't need to, because in Vietnam there are only two choices: hot and, during the monsoon season, hot and wet. But sounding like home was important, so we installed a direct line to the weather station at Tan Son Nhut Airbase and started giving regular forecasts. In less than a week, we had to stop because the Viet Cong were using our forecasts to plan their operations. If we said it was going to be overcast and cloudy, for instance, they knew we could not bring in air cover.

There was another reason we were censored, what I thought of as the "bureaucratic" factor. The bombing at My Chan restaurant is a perfect example. It was about 8 p.m. The person I talked with was a relatively low-ranking officer there all alone. If anything went wrong it was his neck on the line, not mine. In such situations one readily decides the safest course of action is to, in the words of Nancy Reagan, "just say no." That's what they did, time after time.

In the film version, Robin Williams put the bombing story on the air anyway. Had I really done so, just as in the film, they would have turned off the transmitter – only a lot faster. Then I wouldn't merely have been taken off the air for

"In the military, you quickly learn there's a thin line between what you can get away with and what you can't. I often pushed up to that line but never crossed it."

a few days; I would have been court-martialed.

In the military, you quickly learn there's a thin line between what you can get away with and what you can't. I often pushed up to that line but never crossed it. Unlike the film's ending, I was not thrown out of Vietnam. I stayed my full one-year tour and after my four-year hitch, I was honorably discharged.

There was no music censorship on Armed Forces Radio in the mid-1960s. If it was a major artist on a major label, we probably had it and could play it; the only limitation was the program's format. If, say, you were doing a country music show, you wouldn't play progressive jazz. Beyond that, though, there was no control over our music; nobody was forcing us to broadcast polkas and



Adrian Cronauer, right, talks with U.S. Rep. Randy "Duke" Cunningham following the successful vote for a flag-protection amendment in the House of Representatives last summer. Sandy schaeffer

Lawrence Welk.

The film shows bags and bags of fan mail arriving every day and a bank of telephones ringing off the hook with requests. That never happened. There weren't any phone booths in the rice paddies. Where were they

going to call from?
Occasionally someone would recognize my name. More often, they wouldn't until I said something

about "Good Morning Vietnam!"
"Oh, yeah," they'd say. "How
about playing a record for me?"

That opening shout, though, did catch on. I found out that, on particularly bad days, certain troops would turn to their radios and yell the GI equivalent of "Get stuffed, Cronauer!" In at least one case, a man greeted my sign-on by picking up his M-16 and blowing away his radio.

When I left Vietnam, Army Specialist Cramer Haas took over the Dawnbuster show, keeping the same format and the same sign-on. They became a tradition with each succeeding morning DJ. Now I frequently meet veterans who tell me, "I used to listen

to you every morning."
"When were you there?" I

ask. "In '69 and '70."

My tour was in '65 and '66. But everyone remembers the manic shout.

"Goooooooood Morning Vietnam!" So they assume they heard me, and I usually don't correct them.

I still get a chill when, at'a veterans' reunion, someone shakes my hand and quietly says, "Thanks for helping me get through 'Nam." It makes me realize how, in my own unconventional way, I made a little difference. I feel that's a worthwhile legacy.

Adrian Cronauer, former U.S.
Air Force sergeant, co-authored
the original story for the motion
picture "Good Morning
Vietnam!" He is now a partner
in a Washington law firm.

Article design: Doug Rollison



Marines have served our country proudly for more than 225 years "in every clime and place". The Marine Corps' reputation is built and forever endures because of three core values observed by these American heroes. Since 1775, Honor, Courage and Commitment have provided strength to our country's "Soldiers of the Sea".



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Banking your own blood draws interest



Hip-replacement patients who donate their own blood may clot less.

Doctors theorize that

makes the blood thinner

donating blood before

and less likely to clot.

surgery essentially

BY TARA PARKER-POPE

Long Island, N.Y., resident Eileen Leavell recently donated blood. But this time it wasn't to help others. It was to help herself.

Leavell, 65, needed hip-replacement surgery, a procedure that often requires a blood transfusion. She opted to bank her own blood to avoid receiving

a transfusion from a stranger.

New research shows that patients who donate their own blood before surgery – a process called autologous blood donation – may reap a greater benefit than just peace of mind. A study at New York's Hospital for Special Surgery found that autologous blood donors had a markedly lower rate of blood clots following hin-renla

rate of blood clots following hip-replacement surgery than did patients who received transfusions from the

regular blood supply.

"It was my intention from the get-go to donate my own blood, so I had the comfort of knowing it was the right blood type, a good match and I wouldn't expose myself to any further infection or problems," Leavell says. "But then there was the additional bonus of knowing I had possibly avoided blood clots."

The development of blood clots, a condition called deep venous thrombosis, is a potential complication following any surgery. The risk is particularly high in orthopedic surgery. Most of the time, blood clots don't cause symptoms, but they can cause pain and swelling. More rarely, the problem is life-threatening if the clot travels to a lung.

Researchers have found that patients who received standard blood transfusions were, on average, 50 percent more likely to develop blood clots than patients who had received their own blood. In one group of patients, 18 percent of those who received standard transfusions developed clots compared to 10.5 percent in the autologous donor group.

Although the reason autologous donors develop fewer clots isn't entirely clear, doctors theorize that donat-

ing blood before surgery essentially makes the blood thinner and less likely to clot, says study author Geoffrey Westrich, assistant professor of orthopedic surgery at the Hospital for Special Surgery.

Patients who donate their own blood before surgery arrange it through their physicians. Insurance reimbursement varies and sometimes hospitals charge extra for

the service.

Typically, patients are advised to bank their own blood only if it's likely that the surgery will require a transfusion. Depending on the surgery, autologous donors usually give two to three pints over a two- to three-week period, and donors may be advised to take iron supplements.

Commonly, patients want to

store their own blood even if surgery isn't required, in the event they ever need a transfusion. That's usually not practical because blood has a limited storage life unless it's frozen. But in an emergency situation there's usually not time to retrieve a specific donor's blood from a blood bank or to thaw it.

The risk of contracting HIV through blood transfusion is miniscule – about one for every 1 million units transfused. However, one out of every 12,000 patients

receives the wrong blood type.

Even people who bank their own blood face risks. Bacteria can still contaminate it, and a patient can still receive blood that isn't theirs. In one survey, about 1 percent of hospitals said they gave autologous blood to the wrong patient at least once in the previous year. To avoid those problems, many hospitals require patients themselves to double-check the label of their supply.

Tara Parker-Pope is an author and columnist for The Wall Street Journal.

Living Well is a section designed to provide general information to our readers. It is not intended to be, nor is it, medical advice. Readers should consult their personal physician when they have health problems.

Stroke: America's third most common killer

Americans pay \$30 billion annually for long-term disability care.

BY DR. JOHN R. FEUSSNER

Every minute, someone in America has a stroke, according to the American Stroke Association. Strokes are America's third most common killer, ranked under heart disease and cancer. They are the leading cause of long-term disability, costing \$30 billion annually.

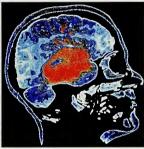
The most common type of stroke occurs when a blood clot forms in an artery bringing blood to the brain. Part of the brain does not receive oxygen, and brain cells die within minutes. The areas of the body these cells control may suffer irreversible damage. Common after-effects of stroke include paralysis on one side of the body, vision problems, difficulty speaking and memory loss.

Warning Signs. Five warning signs of stroke, all of which come on suddenly, include:

- Numbness or weakness of the face, arm or leg, especially on one side.
- Difficulty speaking or understanding
- Difficulty with vision.
- Dizziness or loss of balance.
- Severe headache with no known cause.

In a transient ischemic attack, or mini-stroke, these signs may last only a few minutes or hours and cause no lasting damage. But any of these warning signs, no matter how temporary, should be treated as a life-threatening emergency. Call 911 immediately. A new clot-dissolving drug called tissue plasminogen activator may help many stroke victims, but it must be administered within three hours of a stroke's onset. Following emergency treatment at the

hospital, stroke victims undergo extensive tests to determine the extent of brain damage and the best treatment, which may include medication or surgery to clear blocked arteries.



Corbis Stock Mark

Risk Factors. The greatest risk factor for stroke is hypertension, or high blood pressure – anything above 140 over 90 is considered high. High blood pressure leads to hardening of the arteries, which impairs blood circulation and can result in the clots and ruptured vessels that cause stroke. Similarly, people with existing heart problems or high cholesterol are more likely to suffer strokes.

Fortunately, blood pressure can often be lowered with medication and changes in lifestyle. Among the measures that have been shown to ease hypertension are exercising; shedding excess weight; reducing alcohol consumption; cutting back on smoking – or even better, quitting altogether; and reducing salt (sodium chloride), saturated fat and cholesterol. Ask your doctor what's right for you.

Other risk factors cannot be changed. The older you are, the greater your risk of stroke. More than 70 percent of stroke victims are 65 or older. Men and women are at about equal risk for stroke, although strokes are more often fatal among women.

Blacks are at greater risk than whites for hypertension and stroke. Diabetes, past mini-strokes and a family history of stroke also raise the risk.

VA Research. VA is attacking strokes on several fronts. In a major VA clinical trial, the drug gemfibrizol, which raises "good" cholesterol, reduced the frequency of stroke by 29 percent. Another study now in progress is testing a theory pioneered by Dr. Kilmer McCully of the VA in Providence, R.I., that dietary changes which decrease levels of homocysteine – an amino acid – may cut the risk of heart disease and stroke.

To try to improve rehabilitation after stroke, VA investigators in Birmingham, Ala., developed "constraint-induced therapy," which promotes movement in the affected side of a stroke patient. And in Palo Alto, Calif., VA scientists were the first to show that robot-assisted rehabilitation therapy has advantages over conventional therapy for restoring upper-limb movement after stroke.

Stroke experts in Durham, N.C., working under VA's Quality Enhancement Research Initiative, have developed a blueprint for stroke care throughout the VA health system. Also in Durham, researchers have been studying how depression affects patients after a stroke has occurred.

These are just some of the things the Veterans Health Administration is doing to improve prevention, treatment and rehabilitation for this life-threatening condition that results in the hospitalization of 15,000 veterans and thousands of other Americans each year.

John R. Feussner, M.D., M.P.H., is chief research and development officer of the Veterans Health Administration.

Patriotism vs. art

A battle over offensive "art" has moved from Colorado to the nation's capital. But elected representatives in Washington may have the last laugh in this battle with the wine-and-cheese crowd.

Marcellee Gralapp, art director of a public library in Boulder, Colo., recently vetoed an attempt to drape the American flag over the front entrance. "We have people of every faith and culture walking into this building, and we want everybody to feel welcome," she said. But Gralapp managed to approve a display in the library titled "Hung Out to Dry," which featured severed ceramic male sex organs hanging from a clothesline. It was part of an art exhibit on domestic violence. Someone stole the ceramic objects, however, and left in their place an American flag.

The guilty party was later identified as Bob Rowan, husband, father and Boulder taxpayer, who packed the "art" into a box that he planned to return to its creator. "It should never belong in something I pay taxes for," he said.

Rep. Tom Tancredo, R-Colo., responded by introducing a bill prohibiting federally funded groups, including public libraries, from banning the American flag.

Pentagon beware

Investigative journalist Charles Thompson is producing a documentary about the 1996 crash of TWA 800. And the Pentagon won't like it. Thompson, whose 30-year career includes serving as a producer for CBS's "60 Minutes" and ABC's "20/20," believes the U.S. military accidentally shot down the plane while trying to hit a drone and that the incident was covered up. "That plane was hit by one or two missiles," Thompson says.

Officially, the plane went down because of a fuel-tank explosion – an explanation that contradicts alleged eyewitness accounts.

Thompson, who has been researching the matter for years, said he has uncovered evidence that the Navy was testing the Aegis antimissile system at the time of the tragedy. He claims to have a White

Here's something new: 'gang' patriotism

Congress is doing its best to promote patriotism among young people. By a 297-125 vote, the House passed a resolution introduced by Rep. Walter Jones, R-N.C., stating that America's schools should set aside time to allow children to pray for - or quietly reflect on - the nation during this time of struggle against international terrorism. But the new patriotism is receiving an "F" in some academic quarters.

In Anaheim, Calif., two students were prevented from wearing patriotic pins because of the school district's "gang paraphernalia" policy. The pins consisted of no more than an American flag and the words "God Bless America." The boys were threatened with suspension if they wore the pins

again. After contacting the school district and following up with a legal opinion, an attorney from the Pacific Jus-

tice Institute was told that the teacher acted outside the policies of the school district. The district promised that teachers in

the future would respect the rights of students to wear patriotic symbols.

In the president's home state, a principal at Johnston High School in Austin declared it was "inappropriate" for his students to participate in patriotic events and refused to allow the high school band to perform at a "Rally for America" at the Capitol. Several University of Texas student organizations withdrew their initial support for the event.

- C.K.

House document showing a need to obtain the computer tapes of the USS Normandy, an Aegis-guided missile cruiser in the area at the time. This is the same system that mistakenly shot down an Iranian passenger plane in 1988. These tapes would describe what the ship saw on its radar and perhaps what happened. Thompson said documents he obtained indicate the radar system on the ship has been used in the past to conduct surveillance of airliners going in and out of the New York area.

It will be difficult for the Pentagon, which denies any role in the crash, to discredit Thompson. He served two tours in Vietnam as a naval officer and was decorated on 18 occasions. His journalism credits include an Emmy for investigative reporting and a National Headliner Award.

Rain, snow, or terror

In honor of America's mail carriers, the House passed a resolution stating that the men and women of the U.S. Postal Service "have done an outstanding job of delivering the mail during this time of national emergency." The USPS wants a federal bailout for expenses related to the anthrax scare and other rising costs.

But the National Taxpayers Union says it still costs too much money to deliver mail.

NTU Deputy Press Secretary and Policy Analyst Jerry Terry said an agreement to have FedEx transport some mail will save USPS about \$1 billion in air-transportation costs over the next several years. "This is in spite of the fact that, unlike the postal service, FedEx must pay taxes and other fees imposed on a private company, while still making a profit.

"Unfortunately, the Postal Service, with its government-imposed monopoly on first-class mail delivery, has no competition and is only accountable to big-spending politicians and powerful labor unions." Terry said.

- Cliff Kincaid

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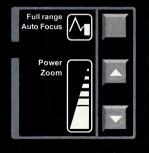




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A tradition of patriotic pride

BY ELISSA KAUPISCH

As a show of patriotism following the Sept. 11 attacks, American Legion National Commander Richard J. Santos asked The American Legion family to implement Resolution 107. Passed last August at the national convention in San Antonio, the resolution reinstates the Blue Star Banner program. Santos encourages posts to provide a Blue Star Banner to each family with a relative serving in the war on terrorism.

The red-bordered banners, with blue or gold star in a field of white, are displayed in windows of the homes of servicemembers' families. During World War II, banners could be purchased at five-&-tencent stores and local hardware shops. In more recent years, Legion posts have distributed them.

The service-banner tradition dates back to World War I. On May 28, 1918, President Wilson



BUY A BANNER \$6.95 each from Emblem Sales. Call toll-free (888) 4-LEGION. Specify item 72982 for Blue Star Banners and 72982.G for Gold Star Banners approved a resolution, suggested by the Women's Committee of the Council of Nation-al Defenses, that American women wear black bands on their left

arms displaying gold stars for family members who gave their lives for their country. From the arm bands came the service banners, representing relatives and friends serving in the Armed Forces or who died during service. Since the early days of World War I, service flags have displayed a blue star for each family member in the military.

When World War I began yielding fatalities, the nation wanted to separately honor those who died for their country. The gold star was substituted and stitched onto the



During World War II, posters like this promoted Blue Star Banners. The American Legion Library

banner, completely covering the blue star. Rather than emphasizing tragedy and personal loss of the family, the Gold Star Banner represents honor and glory due a fallen servicemember, as well as the last full measure of pride and devotion of the family in this sacrifice.

In June 1928, Grace Darling Seibold of Washington, D.C., who lost a son during World War I, founded American Gold Star Mothers to support mothers who had lost sons and daughters in the war. The original group, with a membership of 65 mothers from across the nation, was founded to perpetuate the ideals of Americanism. A national organization later united smaller local and state charters. Membership grew to include mothers who lost sons and daughters in all U.S. wars and peacekeeping missions.

Today, 200 chapters of American Gold Star Mothers serve veterans in local communities and in veterans' hospitals. They also work closely with veterans organizations, such as The American Legion.

In 1942, Blue Star Mothers of America was formed, and the group continues to support troops abroad and veterans at home.

Legion teams up with e-recruiter

The American Legion recently announced a new partnership with Transition Assistance Online, the nation's premier e-recruiting Web site, in an effort to bring TAOnline.com's employment resources to Legion members. TAOnline.com targets the military community and offers free support and resources for the entire job-search and relocation process. The American Legion has long provided a

FOR MORE INFO www.TAOnline.com variety of membership benefits and support

services to former military members and their families, as well as those serving on active duty. This partnership provides yet another important service.

TAOnline.com co-founder G. Roderick Gillette says the company was created to meet the needs of transitioning servicemembers, veterans, retirees, reservists and military spouses. In addition to posting job openings and resumés, it offers career advice and tools for finding civilian jobs.

"We want to encourage people to not only use us at the time of separation but any time they have job needs throughout their entire post-military career," Gillette says.

Legion members will now have access to a fully functional job board through The American Legion Web site, www.legion.org. Employers who post their ads on the TAOnline site and who search the TAOnline resumé database are specifically looking for job-seekers from the military community. Some of the leading companies in the country, including AT&T, Raytheon, Honeywell and eBay, use TAOnline for that purpose. Under the new partnership, Legionnaires can encourage more employers to hire veterans and those associated with the military.

"Now more than ever, employers should consider hiring those individuals who put their lives on the line for this great country," National Commander Richard J. Santos said.

New perk for Legionnaires

Membership in The American Legion offers numerous perks through partnerships with U.S. corporations. Those perks serve as excellent incentives to join and remain in the organ-

A recent partnership with American Legion Wireless offers cell-phone service plans to Legionnaires at discounted prices. Through its one-source shop, members may choose from among several monthly service plans offered by leading wireless carriers such as AT&T Wireless, Cingular Wireless, Worldcom, Nextel and Voicestream, as well as cell phones from leading manufacturers such as Nokia, Motorola, Ericsson and Panasonic. Each package includes - free of charge - an Internet-ready cell phone, an in-car phone charger, a hands-free kit and a belt clip. Shipping and handling fees are included. American Legion Wireless customers also receive free phone text messages on Legion news, event reminders and legislative updates.

Join us!

The American Legion is an organization of veterans serving veterans, their families and communities. The Legion serves as the veteran's voice in Washington, fighting for the benefits and rights of those who served our country in the armed forces.

Membership eligibility is based upon dates set forth by Congress. Eligibility dates are from 4/6/17 to 11/11/18; 12/7/41 to 12/31/46; 6/25/50 to 1/31/55; 2/28/61 to 5/7/75; 8/24/82 to 7/31/84; 12/20/89 to 1/31/90; and from 8/2/90 to present.

For information concerning membership, write The American Legion, Attn. Membership Division, P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206-1055; call (800) 433-3318; e-mail ia@legion.org; or visit the Web site at www.legion.org/membership/ membership.htm.



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Legionnaire James Abejuro of San Francisco American Legion Post 737 is surrounded by children he helped last year during his annual weeklong mission trip to the Philippines. There he helped provide health-care services to needy Filipinos. Courtest James Abeylor

Man on a mission

Legionnaire James Abejuro of San Francisco Post 737 serves humanity in a unique way. Every January, he embarks on a weeklong mission trip sponsored by the Philippine Medical Society of Northern California. The mission offers medical, dental and surgical services to needy Filipinos.

As part of the support staff, Abejuro sorts and mixes medicines, takes patients' temperatures and serves as an interpreter. When Abejuro makes his annual trip, he takes along several boxes of toys and clothing to distribute among the people he serves. Abejuro pays his own airfares and hotel expenses, helping defray expenses incurred by the medical society.

Last year, 113 volunteers served 9,790 patients from the province of Occidental Mindoro, Philippines.

Post assures pledge part of school day

Members of American Legion Post 1776 in Apple Valley, Minn., recently took a stand against what it deemed unacceptable behavior by a local school district

- especially in light of the nation's renewed patriotism following Sept. 11.

Every day at the start of school, elementary students from Independent School District 196 recite the Pledge of Al-

legiance. But when school board member Judy Lindsay proposed a policy change requiring all students in the system to start the school day with the pledge, the proposal was tabled and sent to the district's policy review board for study. The board decided not to discuss the

policy until November.

But Post 1776 Commander Duane Glum told district officials, "No, we're going to talk about it

now." He then told the school board and district officials his post would withhold all donations to the school system – between \$80,000 and \$100,000 annually – until a policy change was made. One week later.

school officials agreed to an optional pledge throughout the school system each day.

School District 196 Superintendent John Haro said money wasn't the issue in the decision; patriotism was. Either way, Post 1776 took a stand and made a difference.

Post helps veteran get dying wish

During an interview for a documentary, 84-year-old World War II veteran Arthur "Archie" Watkins of Blossburg, Pa., mentioned he would like to receive the Combat Infantry Badge before he died. Weeks later, he was diagnosed with cancer, the prognosis poor.

Upon hearing about Watkins' wish, Blossburg American Legion Post 572 worked to cut through red tape to grant his wish.

The community honored Watkins during a special ceremony in August when U.S. Sen. Rick Santorum, R-Pa., presented him with the Combat Infantry Badge that he was entitled to, along with other forgotten decorations. More than 300 people, including Legionnaires and Auxiliary members, attended.

"I know why this medal is so important," Santorum said. "The Combat Infantry Badge meant you stood beside others in a foxhole somewhere and fought together."

Watkins stood tall, wearing the uniform he wore when he made a surprise return home.

Drafted at age 27, Watkins left his wife and two young sons to serve in Europe. His return was a surprise because he had been reported dead. Instead, he was taken prisoner and sent to Nazi Germany. Of the 355 men in his camp, only 187 survived.

Watkins once backed out of an escape plan at the last minute, a decision that saved his life. He awoke the next morning to find the bullet-ridden bodies of his buddies piled on top of one another as a warning to others.

Watkins received accolades in front of his community's veterans' monument, dedicated on May 30, 1945. Watkins learned that his father had donated three of the stones in the memorial, one for each of his sons who served in World War II.

Eleven days after the ceremony, Watkins passed away, knowing he'd been granted his final wish, thanks to Blossburg Post 572 and his local community.



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How to use your National Reunion Registry

The National Reunion Registry handles all reunion information services for The American Legion Magazine. NRR, a division of Military Information Enterprises, Inc., is a private organization that provides information about reunions, helps veterans locate old buddies and offers other special benefits to veterans and their families.

NRR maintains contact information on thousands of reunions and provides this information free of charge to veteran

There are several ways to register reunions or check reunion list-ings with the National Reunion Registry. Please contact the organiza-tion directly by writing to NRR/Reunions, PO Box 17118, Spartanburg, SC 29301, by faxing (864) 595-0813 or via e-mail at information@militaryUSA.com. Due to the large number of reunions, NRR cannot accept phone requests for reunion information.

To register a reunion, you should include the complete name of the organization and branch of service with your request. The request

should also include the reunion dates and city, along with a contact name and telephone number. Please also include a size estimate of the

Using the Internet is the quickest, most accurate way to access the reunion registry. You may check to see if your buddies are planning a reunion by visiting NRR's Web site at www.MilitaryUSA.com. To promote the best accuracy and fastest process when listing your reunion, complete the Reunion Registration Form available on the Web site.

Locating a Buddy

MilitaryUSA.com offers many services for veterans, including tips and techniques for locating current or former military members. How To Locate Anyone Who Is or Has Been in the Military: Armed Forces Locator Guide is a practical guide to help people locate service members. The publication can be purchased by contacting MIE Publishing, P.O. Box 17118, Spartanburg, SC 29301 or by faxing (864) 595-0813.

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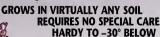
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Anyone who served with Co 27 at the Naval Tng Center in Great Lakes, Ill., between January and March 1962 or with the V-1 Div aboard the USS Corsolation, CVA 64.

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Anyone who served as an instructor at the Naval Tactical Data Systems School at the Mare Island Naval Shipyard in Vallejo, Calif., in 1962, contact Mervin Oeal, PD. Box 869, Oundee, FL 33838 or call (863) 439-8044. Anyone who served with the 43rd Div, 118th Cbt Eng on

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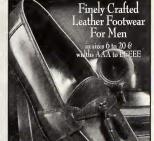
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The length of a film should be directly related to the endurance of the human bladder. - Alfred Hitchcock

Steee-rike!

Having a family is like having a bowling alley installed in your head.

- Martin Mull

Now That's Old

When I was a boy, the Dead Sea was only sick.

- George Burns

Out of the Woods

Camping is nature's way of promoting the motel business. - Dave Barry



"... and a 23 percent national sales tax won't hurt anybody – unless, of course, you actually buy something."



"This should discourage my teen-ager from wanting one."

Prison vs. Work

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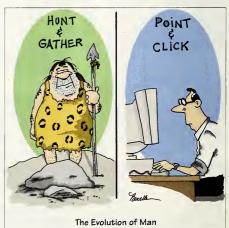
At work, you spend most of your time in a 6 x 8 cubicle.

In prison, you spend your time looking through bars from inside wanting to get out.

At work, you spend your time wanting to get out and go inside bars.

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At work, you must carry around a security card and open all the doors yourself.



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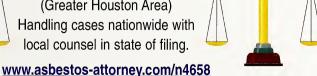
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